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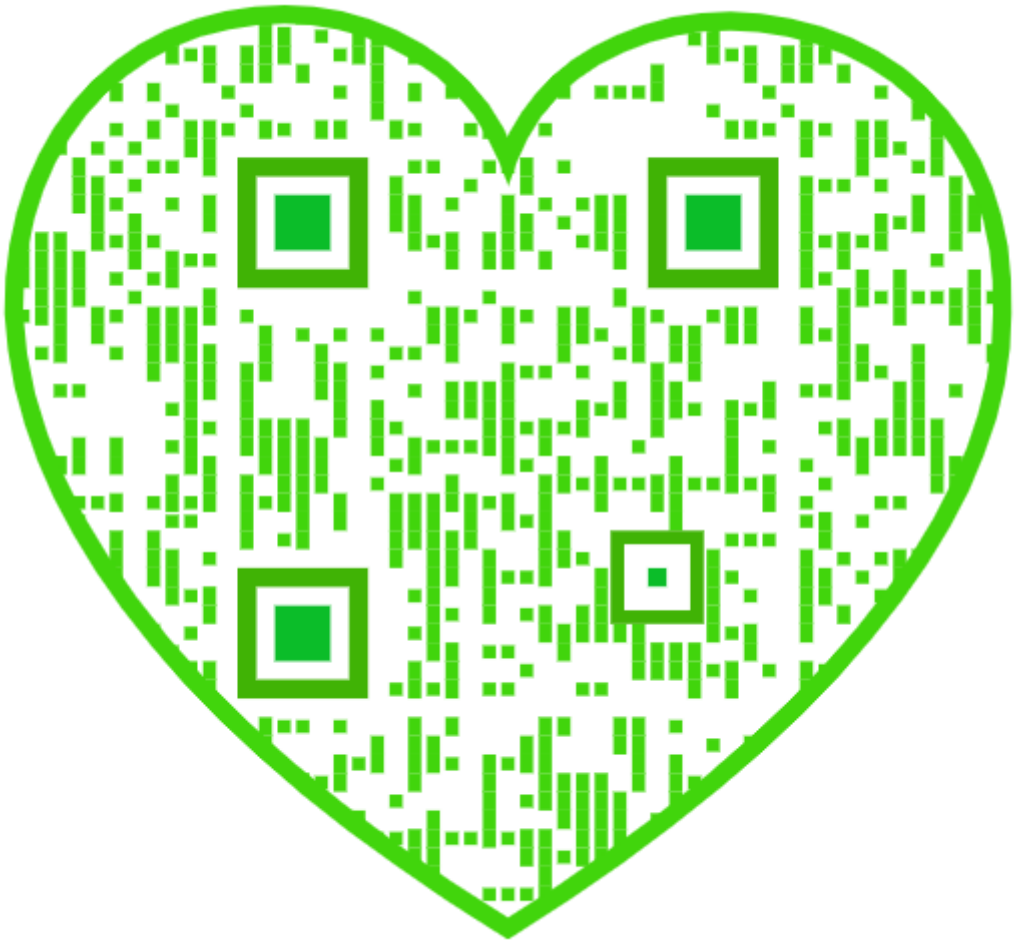

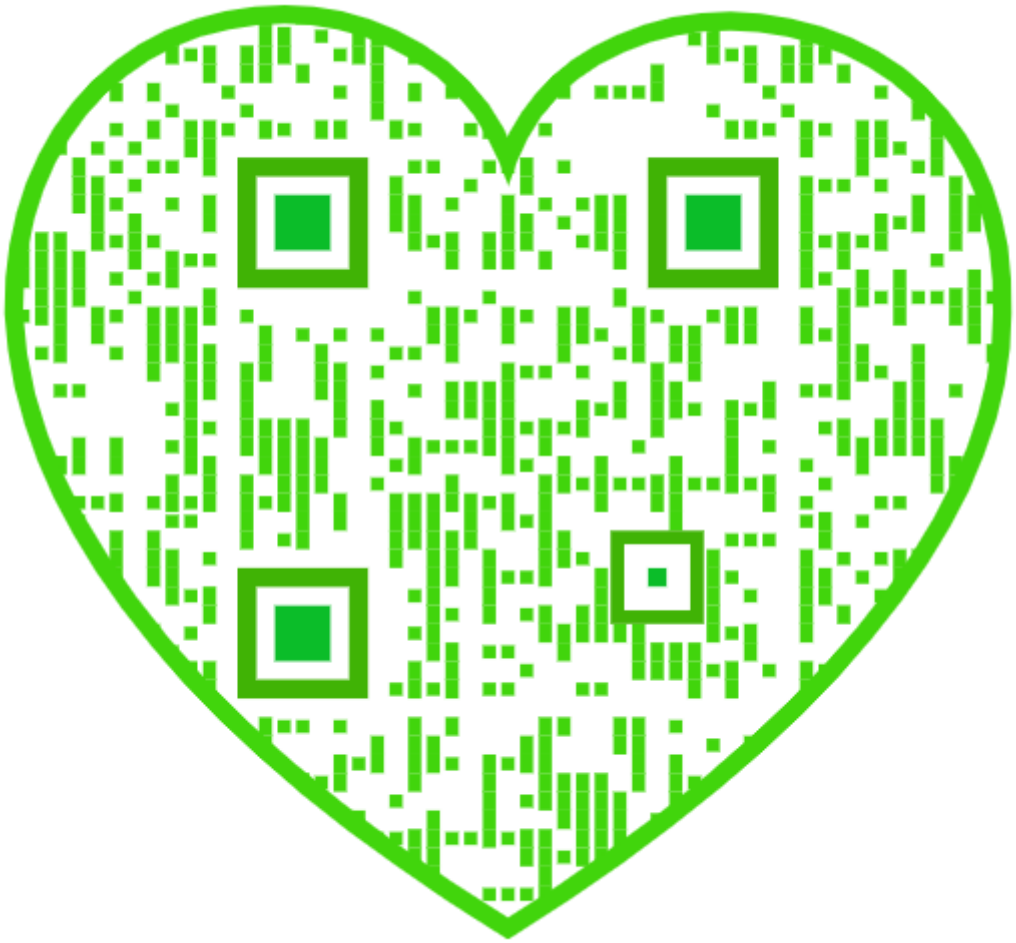

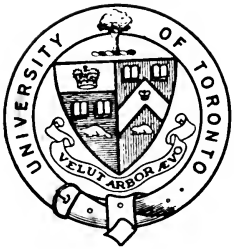

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A COMPLETE MANUAL OF ARCHERY.

WITH MANY CHAPTERS OF ADVENTURES BY FIELD AND FLOOD, AND AN APPENDIX CONTAINING PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE MANUFACTURE AND USE OF ARCHERY IMPLEMENTS.

BY

MAURICE THOMPSON.

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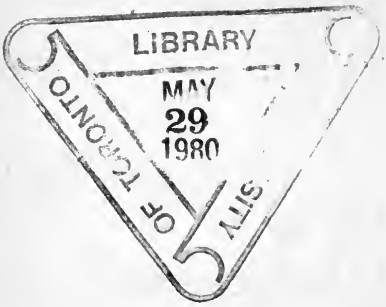

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To

WILL. H. THOMPSON,

THE CONSTANT COMPANION OF MY WILD-WOOD DAYS,
THE ENTHUSIASTIC AND PERFECTLY-TRAINED ARCHER,
THE KEEN WOODSMAN AND TIRELESS HUNTER,

THIS BOOK

IS

Affectionately Inscribed

BY HIS BROTHER.

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THE WITCHERY OF ARCHERY.

CHAPTER I.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

I HAVE not purposed writing a history of archery. My object has been to present, in the simplest way, some of my own adventures by field and flood, from which the reader might easily gather a comprehensive knowledge of the theory and practice of a sport which is as harmless and fascinating as it is old and honorable. It may not be amiss, however, to here sketch an outline of the rise of archery in England, the great mother of archers.

It is a well-worn saying that experience is the perfect school. In this school, at the hands of William the Norman, on the field of Hastings, the English took their first great lesson in archery,

which resulted in establishing in their hearts a profound admiration, almost amounting to veneration, for the long-bows and resistless arrows of their conquerors. With a wise foresight the victorious invader gave into the hands of his subjugated enemies these simple but powerful weapons, and, by a shrewd stroke of policy, made the very carrying of a bow and shafts the badge of a freeman. He well knew that upon missile weapons of superior range and penetration he must depend for all future success in war, and that nothing could cement a people like a sort of democracy in the military idea. Therefore he adroitly managed to make the long-bow and arrows the weapons alike of rich and poor, noble and peasant, the miserable serf being the only person denied their use. From this time forward the long-bow rapidly grew in public favor, until by years of loving practice the English yeomen made it the terror of the world in battle ; and it became the one instrument of forest and field sports common to patrician and plebeian, king and esquire.

It may well be said that the powerful government of Great Britain rests upon a foundation of iron arrow-heads—that its greatest glory has been achieved by the hard shooting of its archers—that its history's most brilliant pages have been graven on imperishable tablets with the bodkin-pointed

shafts of the yeomen who drew bows at Crecy and Agincourt, and all those fights where its supremacy over Europe was enforced by the "whistling grey-goose wing."

Nothing but the most costly and elaborate Spanish coats of mail could withstand a cloth yard arrow from a ninety pound English long-bow. The French rulers tried in vain for many years to educate their subjects in archery so as to return their Norman-Saxon enemies missile for missile. The clumsy cross-bow, however, was their only efficient projectile weapon, and its inferiority to the six-foot yew was made patent on many a bloody field.

In a word, the history of England, from the Norman conquest down to the day when fire-arms supplanted the long-bow and arrows as military and hunting weapons, is the history of archery, and may be read otherwhere.

But the "six-foot yew" would not wholly flee before the rifle and fowling-piece. It was not so easily cast out from the hands of a people whose fathers had made it famous forevermore.

The old toxophilite societies kept up their organizations, and from time to time new ones were formed, until archery, about the last of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, took shape as *par excellence* the sport of the nobility and gentry of England, Scotland, and Wales.

In 1840 Mr. George Agar Hansard published at London a large volume, entitled "The Book of Archery," in which was brought together everything of interest connected with its subject which years of careful labor had enabled him to discover This gave a new impulse to the "royal sport," which obtains to this day.

In the United States there existed no archery organizations prior to the publication, in some of our literary magazines, of a number of my own papers descriptive of long-bow shooting on the lawn and "by field and flood." At present there are hundreds of clubs from Maine to Texas. The spread of the "Toxophilite mania," as some one has named it, has been so sudden and wide that our dealers have been unable to supply the demand for archery tackle, and in most of our towns and villages the manufacture of rather clumsy, but by no means worthless, long-bows and arrows has been quite a paying business. In the following pages I have attempted to afford the newly initiated archer such entertainment as the stories of a veteran, however poorly told, are pretty sure to possess for the tyro. If, on the other hand, this book happen to fall into the hands of an old and experienced archer, let him not cast it aside unread, for many things in it will be new, even to him. Of archery as a lawn game everything is told

in the Appendix. I have there drawn together the fullest information possible on all that pertains to practical bow-shooting and the use and manufacture of all the implements of the archer craft. All is taken from my own experience; not a rule is laid down which I have not practically tested. During the fifteen years that, as an archer, I have roamed the woods, I have tried every kind of bow I could procure, from a plain mulberry stick made with my own hands to a bow of snakewood wrought in the far East by Indian cunning, and every sort of arrow, from a rudely feathered reed to the finest Highfield ever made. I have shot in all kinds of weather, by day and by night, and do not feel that egotism ought to be counted against me, when I offer to describe some of my adventures, even if the offending pronoun does dance pretty freely along my pages. Furthermore, I have keenly enjoyed writing these chapters, as a lazy way of living over again some charming days of excitement and novel sport, and as a tentative venture into a field of book-making as inviting as it is narrow and difficult of access.

The manual of archery given in the Appendix contains everything my experience has suggested, as well as the practical part of Mr. Hansard's work. I have spared no pains in reducing to the simplest and directest rules and maxims all that is necessary

to a perfect practice of bow-shooting for either hunting or target purposes.

It was thought advisable, in the good old days of prefaces, to forestall or disarm criticism by some special plea or another; but, although I have indulged in something akin to the ancient preface, I shall not deny the critic what comfort he may find in making literary faces at my book. Let him say whatever his sense of duty compels. I know and you know, reader, that these tales of a careless archer have made him, for the time, an honest fellow, as, reading them, he listened to the twang of the bow-cord and the keen hiss of the arrow by the reedy lakes, or in the dark, lone woods of the South and West! If he give me due credit for this brief effect, he may leave the rest to—the archers and all the sport-loving folk for whom this book is written.

Of one thing I am sure: no amount of criticism, just or unjust, can turn from me my staunch, sympathetic, and enthusiastic friends, the Boys and Girls of America. I know too well how the rosy-cheeked misses will enjoy the lawn practice with their associates, and the boys, how they will dream of all sorts of adventures in the wild green woods of summer!

The chapters following are arranged with a view to contrast, as they have nothing in them by which

they can be linked together so as to form even the semblance of a continuous narrative. They are the pleasantest and cheeriest fragments of my wildwood days with bow and quiver, put together, without any attempt at high art, for those who love out-door sports and the merry life of a hunter and naturalist. Whilst it has often been necessary, in order to avoid too much skipping about, to dovetail into certain parts of my sketches incidents and adventures not properly belonging to the time and locality, I aver that nowhere have I departed from truth in the descriptions of places and things. That I have, in a few instances, drawn upon my fancy for some local coloring when the outlines of landscapes could not be recollected, I cannot admit or deny, and if I have occasionally "dropped into poetry," I assure the reader that it does not "come higher."

After all, this book is for the archer, and everything in it pertaining to the sport may be relied upon as having come of the very best practice of the "noble exercise of archery."

CHAPTER II.

OUTLINE SKETCH OF THE PRACTICE OF ARCHERY IN HUNTING.

"Cheerily blow the bugle horn
In the cool green woods of morn;
Loose the hounds and let them go,
Wax the cord and bend the bow."

So long as the new moon returns in heaven a bent, beautiful bow, so long will the fascination of archery keep hold of the hearts of men. You have but to mention an archer or archery to your friend, and immediately his interest is aroused. He may scoff at the bow and sneer at the arrow; but he will inquire and show curiosity. Hang a long bow and a quiver of arrows conspicuously in your hall or library, and you will soon discover that no exquisite painting or bit of statuary will receive from guests more attention than will be accorded to these ancient weapons.

No doubt if one could procure a shell strung with gold and silver cords, after the fashion of the old-time instrument with which the gods made

music, the same fascination would attach. Indeed, the lyre was suggested by the bow. Music and poetry sprang from our weapon. The bow is the old first lyre, the monochord, the initial rune of fine art, and is as inseparably connected with the history of culture as are the alphabets of the learned languages. The humanities grew out from archery as a flower from a seed. No sooner did the soft, sweet note of the bow-string charm the ear of genius than music was born, and from music came poetry and painting and sculpture.

What the fragments of Sapphic song and the Homeric epics are to the literature of to-day, the bow is to the weapons of to-day. The Sapphic songs were the natural music of love; the Homeric epics were the natural outpourings of a great self-sufficient soul surcharged with the inspiration of heroism. So the bow was the natural weapon of the simple, perfect physical manhood represented in the idea of Apollo, who, with drawn bow, was the symbol of such manhood displayed in its highest powers and graces.

When a man shoots with a bow it is his own vigor of body that drives the arrow, and his own mind controls the missile's flight. When the archer hears his shaft hiss through the air with a force not to be equalled by those of his competitors, he feels justly proud of his superior manhood. His trained

muscles and toughened thews have done the work. Not so with gun-shooting. The rifle or fowling-piece is charged with a power acting independently of muscular operations, and will shoot just as powerfully for the schoolboy or the weakling as it will for the athlete. It was the hand of a babe which discharged the dynamite at Hellgate. So the pressure of an invalid's finger will send a rifle-ball as far and as true as if the gun had been fired by a Hercules—steadiness of aim alone being required.

The bow and arrows are as old as man. If the origin of any implements of human invention can be accepted as of prehistoric date—even in hieroglyphic history—the archer's curved stick and feathered missiles are entitled to the honor of being placed first on the list. Of the venerable monuments of ingenuity, discovered by our remotest ancestors or preserved in their records, not one is so surely traceable through the shadows of doubtful history to an existence beyond the limits of tradition. The gods were mostly archers, and the goddesses, too, making the bow a classical figure, indispensable with the poets of both ancient and modern times. "Sharp as an arrow," "Swift as an arrow," "Straight as an arrow," "The shafts of envy, love, hatred, or revenge," etc., are expressions as common to the verse-makers of our own time as to those of Pindar and Homer, and using them

subjects no one to a charge of bad taste, whilst "Straight as a ramrod," "Swift as bird-shot," "The buck-shot of envy," or "The cartridges of malice" would be thought expressions or phrases of very questionable propriety in a grave essay, or in a brilliant poem. In fact, as I have said, the bow is one of the primitive humanities—one of the original elements of culture. It is a classic. On the other hand, however, it is curious to note how surely the bow and arrows have found their way into the hands of all wild peoples whose mode of life has made physical culture a necessity with them, and it is equally interesting and significant to discover that, among these wild peoples, a chieftain is invariably chosen on account of his ability to draw a mighty bow.

We are nothing better than refined and enlightened savages. The fibre of our nature is not changed in substance; it is polished and oiled. The wild side of the prism of humanity still offers its pleasures to us, and it is healthful and essentially necessary to broad culture that we accept them in moderation.

Sport, by which is meant pleasant physical and mental exercise combined—play in the best sense—is a requirement of this wild element, this glossed-over heathen side of our being, and the bow is its natural implement.

One day, not long ago, my brother (the Will often mentioned hereafter) and I were practising at a target on a green lawn, when a miserably clad and hunger-pinched tramp approached us. Rags and dirt could not hide, nor could hunger and humiliation blunt the edge of a certain manliness of bearing as he touched his torn hat and paused near us. Could we give him a bite to eat or a few pence to buy him a cheap dinner? He was very hungry. The old story. We sent a lad who was scoring for us to my house to inquire if any cooked victuals were in the pantry, and then resumed our shooting. The tramp stood by watching us. Finally, as if impelled by an irresistible interest, he said:

"Archery is a noble sport."

We turned and looked at him in surprise. He waved his hand in a peculiarly graceful way, and in a sad voice said:

"On Brighton sands I have seen good shooting. I have shot there myself."

"In England?" asked Will.

"Yes," he replied; "I am a gentleman."

Will smiled doubtingly.

"Would you let me shoot once?" he said.

There was sincerity in his voice.

Will handed him his bow and arrow. He took them eagerly, almost snatching them. For a mo-

ment he stood as if irresolute, then quickly fixing the arrow on the string, drew and let fly. The movements were those of a trained archer. The distance was forty yards, and he hit the gold in its very centre.

Will and I looked at each other and at the tramp. We were overpowered. Will posted off to my house at once, and returned with a bottle of wine and a tray of biscuits and tongue, with which that archer tramp did most ravenously regale himself. I mention this to clinch my theory, viz.: That neither poverty, nor shame, nor hunger, nor dissipation, nor anything but death can ever quite destroy the merry, innocent, Arcadian, heathen part of our nature, that takes to a bow and arrows as naturally as a butterfly takes to a flower.

Taking wild game has nearly ceased to be reckoned among the means of gaining a livelihood, and has fallen, or risen, as one may view it, to the level of a sport or means of recreation from the exhaustion and depression consequent to the civilized methods of self-destruction called business. Formerly, table comforts of the most necessary sort had to be procured by the skill or luck of the huntsman, and as the game yearly grew more wary and difficult of approach, as well as more scarce, while the demand for it steadily increased,

necessity invented fire-arms—that terrible source of slaughter which has at last reduced shooting to less than a sport. The limits of this chapter will not admit of even the most condensed statement of the combination of causes which has so revolutionized hunting with a gun, that, as it is the fashion to follow it now, it cannot be recommended as either healthful or pleasant. It is not sport to sling a handful, say from three hundred to seven hundred, pellets at a bird. The true sportsman finds his chief delight, not in the number of birds or other game brought to bag, but in the "brilliancy" of his shooting. As regards skill, no man ought to brag of knocking down two quails, left and right, under the ordinary circumstances of field-shooting. Let us look at the thing for a moment. Say you have four hundred pellets in each barrel of your gun, either of which barrels will, at forty yards, spread that number pretty evenly over nine square feet of space. Say at twenty-five yards, the ordinary limit of quail-shooting range, your gun will cover two feet square thickly with shot. See what a margin for successful inaccuracy. In one case you may aim eighteen inches, and in the other one foot off your bird and yet kill it! With a good choke-bored shot-gun you may hit a duck one hundred yards in the same way. A moment's reflection cannot fail to suggest to sports-

men the calamity which these absolutely murderous weapons are hastening forward.

The shot-gun will soon exterminate game. It already has exterminated it in many large regions. The very sound of a gun is terrible to all wild things. A few more years, and hunting will be a thing of the past, unless some change takes place in our methods of destroying game.

I would not be understood as decrying the shot-gun when it is kept to its place and used only for that sort of game which cannot, from the nature of its habits, be shot except when flying, as the woodcock and marsh-hen, the snipe and most water-fowl, quails and grouse. It is the *abuse* of gun-shooting —the terrible slaughter committed by pot-hunters, that I deplore.

I was yet in my teens when I was taught the use of the long-bow by Thomas Williams, an old hermit of a fellow, whose cabin stood in the midst of a vast pine forest that bordered my father's plantation in the beautiful hill country of North Georgia. My brother Will and I had been practising archery, in a boyish way, for some years before Williams gave us lessons; but though we had of our own efforts become expert in the making and use of our weapons, we found, to our chagrin, that, before we could dare call ourselves bowmen, all we had learned must be thrown away and an art mastered whose

difficulties seemed insurmountable. Williams was an incomparable archer, and delighted in practising with his favorite weapons; but a strange timidity so mastered him that no amount of pleading on our part could prevail on him to make any public exhibition of his skill. We never could get him to come forth boldly and join us in the delightful excursions we undertook to various shooting-grounds after his careful training had made accurate and enthusiastic bowmen of us. The woodpeckers, thrushes, and grossbeaks in the woods immediately surrounding his cabin were the only live marks he ever sought, excepting that occasionally he shot hares by moonlight in an open glade situated a half-mile deeper in the forest.

Of course, before you try to shoot game you must practise shooting at some kind of mark. For this purpose a target is not recommended, since one who is trained to aim at a large graduated disc, like that of a lawn target, either with gun or bow, can rarely shoot well at birds or other small game. The reason is that in target-shooting at a fixed distance one gets used to a certain size, color, and condition of *backgrounds*, and when he gets into the woods and lifts his bow to draw on a bird or a hare, his accustomed rings and gay background are not there. His vision is blurred consequently, and he draws waveringly and shoots indifferently.

A black rubber ball four inches in diameter, suspended in mid-air by a string fastened to a low bough of an apple-tree, makes a first-rate substitute for a bird, and a small bag of straw placed on the ground and shot at, at about twenty yards, gives good hare practice. You will soon discover the great advantage gained by not using the same distance all the time. For, after all, a bowman's skill is scarcely worthy of admiration if it is confined to one range. It is when you have learned to shoot well at all distances between ten and fifty yards, and betake yourself to the woods and fields, that archery becomes a truly royal sport; and not till then do you begin fairly to draw upon the varied resources compassed by the art.

Your first shooting at wild things should be carefully done, choosing the tamest and least wary of birds, in order that your shots may be at very short range and their results accurately noted. See if you shoot too high or too low, too far to the left or the right, and try to cure the fault. You must not think of game till you have killed a number of woodpeckers, meadow-larks, and field-sparrows.

Three things are requisite to bird-shooting with the bow. First, you must know how, under all circumstances and over all kinds of ground surface, to quickly and accurately measure distance with the eye; secondly, you must be quick and noiseless

as a cat in your movements; thirdly, you must draw uniformly, that is, put the same power on every shot, no matter how near or far the bird may be. In other words, draw to the head of your arrow every time you draw.

When, after considerable experience and success at mark-practice, you begin to shoot in the woods, you will discover that to be a good shot is not the half of what it takes to make you a tolerable bird-slayer. Some of the finest shots you will ever make will be misses, and some of the poorest will be centre hits. Such is luck. But in starting out you need not fear that woodpecker shooting will be poor sport. Some of my happiest bouts in the woods have owed all their charm to the excitement of chasing an ivory-bill, a red-head, or a "sap-sucker" from tree to tree, whacking away at him whenever he got still, watching the flight of my arrow as it whisked past him, or struck close to him with a ringing rap like the blow of a hammer, till at last I plumped him over, stringing him half way down my shaft. In a succeeding chapter we will shoot woodpeckers together.

To do regular, even shooting requires a great deal of preparatory practice at unequal distances and under a large variety of influences, with every difference of surroundings and in all sorts of weather. In fact, you will never be a good shot till all the

operations of archery are performed as naturally and almost as involuntarily as your breathing. For instance: a meadow-lark shows his yellow breast in a bunch of clover blossoms, or in a tuft of timothy stubble, thirty yards distant from you—you halt instantly, throw up your bow quickly and gracefully, draw an arrow to the head and let it go sharply, all with as little effort and precisely with the same half-involuntary, half-mechanical accuracy with which you take so many steps in walking. Your arrow flies with a keen hiss straight to the mark and knocks the bird over and over amid a cloud of gold feathers and clover or grass leaves. When you can do this one time out of ten, at even twenty paces, you may begin to call yourself an archer; but do not grow discouraged if it takes a long while to get such ordinary proficiency. "There is no excellence" in archery "without great labor."

The pewter-headed arrows described in the Appendix to this book should be used for all kinds of small birds. For shooting hare and wild-fowl and large game the broad-headed and barbed shafts are necessary.

When you have reached a reasonable proficiency in the use of your weapons at a fixed mark, the next thing to think of is shooting "on the wing," as killing birds while they are flying is called. For

this sort of practice make a spring-board controlled by a trigger so that when a string is pulled a ball of rubber, or, for that matter, any soft material, is thrown from it into the air, after the manner of glass balls from a Bogardus trap. You can begin shooting at a very large ball first, and decrease its size to three inches in diameter as you progress. You will be surprised to find how soon you will learn to hit a six-inch ball, at ten or fifteen paces, when thrown with considerable force into the air. This accomplished, you may begin shooting at tame pigeons let go from a trap, or at meadow-larks as they rise from the clover. Daily practice and great care will soon work wonders.* Two years of sincere, systematic attention to the tried rules of archery will render you an expert, ready to knock down a flying grouse or wood-duck, and able to pierce a deer through the shoulders at one hundred yards. You will then be found in the jungles of Florida, following the hounds after a deer, a bear, or a panther, and handling a ninety pound snakewood bow and three ounce broad-headed hunting shafts with all the ease and power of a Tartar chieftain. Or mayhap your tent will be beside some far northern brook, where the speckled trout leap out after the flies, and where

* For the "School of Shooting," see Appendix.

the dappled fawns come out of the "bush" to wade in the cold water.

But first, before you can blow the bugle horn, or follow the hounds, you must be content to chase the woodpecker.

CHAPTER III.

SOME NOTES ON WOODPECKER SHOOTING.

THE joy is great of him who strays
In shady woods on summer days,
With eyes alert and muscles steady,
His long-bow strung, his arrows ready.

At morn he hears the wood-thrush sing,
He sees the wild rose blossoming,
And on his senses soft and low
He feels the brook song ebb and flow.

Life is a charm, and all is good
To him who lives like Robin Hood,
Hearing ever, far and thin,
Hints of the tunes of Gamelyn.

His greatest grief, his sharpest pain,
Is (when the days are dark with rain)
That for a season he must lie
Inert while deer go bounding by;

Lounge in his lodge, and long and long
For Allen à Dale's delightful song,
Or smack his lips at thought of one
Drink from the friar's demijohn.

But when the sky is clear again,
He sloughs his grief, forgets his pain,
Hearing on gusts of charming weather
The low laugh of his arrow feather

Flying from the spicewood brake,
Or from the maze the brambles make,
Well-sent to where is hammering
The scarlet-crowned woodpecker king.

Of old, so runs a legend of the poets, a beautiful young king of Latium, named Picus, went forth into the forests to enjoy his favorite pastime, hunting. We are told that he was dressed in a wonderful sporting garb, consisting of a splendid purple cloak, bound at the throat with a zone of gold. Through the dusky, pleasant aisles of the woods the young king saw flitting numberless beasts and birds, at which, no doubt, he hurled his whizzing cornel shafts, as a lusty sport-loving lord should. Circe, a woman of doubtful honesty, was, on this very day, going about in the woods hunting for certain herbs, known to grow thereabout, possessing rare properties of great value to dealers in sorcery. Discovering a tuft of the desired weed (I know not whether it was snakeroot or ginseng), Circe stooped and was on the point of sawing it off with a case-knife, when, just beyond a persimmon bush and munching a papaw, she beheld Picus standing up tall and beautiful, glorious in fine purple and sheeny

with gold. It was, on the part of Circe, a case of love at first sight, and with her to love was to speak of it at once. It was leap year, too. So she stuck the case-knife in the ground to mark the place where the ginseng grew (if it was not snake-root), and, stalking up to the king, proposed right off. He spurned her offered caresses indignantly, whereupon she slashed him across the head with a club she held in her hand, to such effect that forthwith he was transformed into a bird which to this day is called *Picus*—the woodpecker.

I have often wondered if the wand of Circe did not fetch the blood from the crown of the head of Picus, for how else can we explain the origin of the red spot, that ever-present and unmistakable mark of the real American woodpecker family? From the demure and quiet sap-sucker up through all the species to the great black woodpecker, this blotch of blood-red feathers is found. A mere dot in the case of the smallest species, it spreads all over the head of the white-tailed variety, and rises into a magnificent scarlet-plumed crown on that of the *Hylotomus pileatus.*

To me the woodpeckers are the most interesting of all the American small birds. I never tire of studying them. Obtrusive, inquisitive, bellicose, knavish, self-important, dishonest, and noisy beyond compare, the white-tailed variety is, perhaps, the

most versatile genius of the woods. He attempts everything with an air of the most presuming impertinence, and, in fact, the only thing he really cannot accomplish, in the way of attainments generally thought necessary to a well-educated and cultured bird, is, simply to sing a good song. Even his love-note is a sort of rasping squawk, sounding like "*squeear, squeear, squeear,*" repeated indefinitely. I once saw a great horned owl perch itself on the stub of a broken limb of a decayed tree, just below a hole in which a woodpecker had its nest. It was after nightfall, and the moon was directly behind the owl from me, bringing into bold relief the huge bird's outlines. Occasionally the woodpecker, doubtlessly afraid for its young, darted out of the hole to give the owl a peck, and retreated instantly within.

It must be a quick arrow that hits a white-tailed woodpecker. He is a consummate dodger, flipping himself round a tree or behind a fence-stake as quick as thought at the sound of your bow-string. See that one yonder on that slender stump. His back is fair. He looks as though a line had been drawn across his middle, and then he had been painted white below it and black above, with a dash of fiery red for a head! He is only twenty-five yards away. Try him with a light pewter-headed arrow. You pull very steadily and strong, loosing

evenly and sharply. Away darts your shaft. Whack! What a blow on the stump exactly where the bird was! But too late to get him. He heard your bow-string, and quick as a flash he slid round behind the stump, and when the arrow struck he flew away! See, now he is on the horizontal bough of an oak situate about twenty feet up the trunk. I will take a shot at him. Watch now. Twang! His-s-s-s! See him swing round and hang, back downward, under the limb as the arrow darts above! Too quick for me. Wait a moment. We'll try him with this slender, narrow-feathered arrow which has the merest drop of hard solder for a head. You draw on him with great care and let drive. Ha! centre-shot, and down he comes! That shaft was a little too swift for his dodging! He is your bird.

There are several kinds of woodpecker misnamed sap-suckers by our people. The speckled bird of the Southern pine forests, nearly allied to the *Picus pubescens*, or downy woodpecker, of our Northern States, is generally called sap-sucker by the Southern people, while two varieties of the hairy woodpecker and the downy woodpecker, and the *Centurus Carolinus*, or true sap-sucker, all go by that one name—sap-sucker—in all the Northern States. These birds are quite tame, as a rule, and fall easy victims to the expert archer; but you will shoot a

long while before you hit even the foolish little speckled fellow that bores the holes in your apple trees.

It is amusing to watch a sap-sucker, after he has made ring after ring of pits round an apple, a cedar, or a maple tree, go his rounds from one to another of these holes, sipping the nectar therefrom, seeming to enjoy, in a most satisfactory way, this liquid fruit of his toil, meantime keeping a lively lookout for an enemy. He is a good mark; but as soon as you have learned to hit him I would advise you to seek nobler game, as he is a pretty little fellow and growing quite rare in many localities.

The yellow-bellied woodpecker is everywhere to be seen in our woods. He, together with the hairy and downy varieties, furnished me many days of rare sport before I could claim the right to be called an expert archer.

But by far the noblest bird of the Picus family in the United States is the great American black woodpecker (*Hylotomus pileatus*), which has disappeared already from the Western woods, and is becoming rare even in the vast forests of the South. When at rest, his body appears quite black. His head has whitish stripes about the eyes and is surmounted by a long tuft of brilliant scarlet feathers. When he takes to flight, which he does with great

vigor at the least alarm, his wings show a sprinkling of white, which relieves the dusky hue of his body.

This bird is at present most numerous in the mixed forests of oak and pine in the hill country of East Tennessee, North Georgia, and North Alabama. It was in Gordon County, Georgia, while yet new-fledged archers from the school of the Hermit, that Will and I bagged our first specimens of the great woodpecker king. It was a most exciting bout in the woods of the hilly "divide" between the valley of the Oothcaloga and that of the Oostanaula, two streams whose confluence is a mile west of the town of Calhoun, on the Western and Atlantic Railroad, on which excursion we killed three specimens, the finest I ever saw.

It was in December, clear, cool weather, a little hazy, not unlike our Northern Indian summer, with scarcely a breath of wind.

Early in the morning we entered the woody outskirts of the "divide," and were not long in finding two black woodpeckers, whose loud pounding reached our ears when several hundred yards distant. They were on an old log, the stem of a fallen pine tree, busily engaged in pecking holes in search of the larvæ of ants or the white sawworms which infest dead pine-wood. At that time

we were armed with mulberry long-bows of our own make, and arrows too heavy and clumsy for first-rate shooting. But we were full of confidence and as enthusiastic as boys could be. We let fly from the cover of a pine thicket at forty yards, making a clear miss of it, but frightening the birds terribly. Their flight was short, however, and one of them, not knowing whence the arrows had come, lit on a post oak sapling scarcely twenty yards from our thicket. Will drew quickly and let him have a blunt arrow; but it struck too far back, only breaking one of his thighs, and sending him off on a crazy, winding flight. Securing our arrows we gave chase. And now the sport began in good earnest. The bird would belong to whichever could give him the death-shot. I fear, if I tell you that for two hours we raced after that bird, shooting at it somewhere near a dozen times each before, at last, Will bowled it over, you will smile at our archery; but you try it before your smile broadens into a laugh, will you? and report the result. It may seem to you an easy feat to hit a bird nearly as large as a crow at twenty or thirty yards, but I assure you it requires no little skill to do it, and you must remember we were beginners. I had the pleasure of bagging the second bird by a shot (no doubt somewhat of an accident) I have rarely equalled, striking it with a barbed arrow (the shaft

of which was a slender reed or cane) at the distance of sixty yards. The third bird was knocked from a pine stump, at thirty yards, by Will. Of course, in the meantime, we missed a great many shots, our arrows flying surprisingly wide of or astonishingly close to our intended victims.

By at first being content with practising on woodpeckers and meadow-larks, the beginner in wildwood archery will soon get by heart the primer of woodcraft. The half of successful bow-shooting at game depends upon the archer being able to approach to within easy range of his object without being discovered. He will soon take on all the cunning, caution, slyness, alertness, quickness, and silentness of an Indian or a cat. The following simple rules will be found, when mastered, to afford a perfect knowledge of small-bird shooting :

1. Use light, narrow-feathered arrows, with very blunt pewter heads. Pointed shafts will stick into the trees and remain out of reach. For a description of the method of making birding-arrows, see Appendix.

2. A birding-bow should be light, and of not over fifty pounds drawing power, as it must be handled quickly and under all sorts of difficulties, such as interfering brambles and brushwood, awkward positions, etc.

3. The quiver (see Appendix) should be large enough to hold at least a dozen arrows, and should be so well secured to the belt that it will not rattle when you walk.

4. Shoot short distances at first, and pay strict attention to where your arrow goes, or it will be lost.

5. Glance over the ground between you and your bird before shooting, and in your mind measure the *probable distance in yards.* When you have shot, note whether you shot over, under, or beside the bird, so that you may rectify the fault with the next shot.

6. Use arrows of but one length and weight, and draw each one to the head thereof in shooting, whether the bird be near or far.

7. Do not grow discouraged if at first your arrows fly wide of the object. Keep trying. Creep closer to your birds and shoot coolly and deliberately. Never be nervous or excited. Remember that you are learning the alphabet now. Presently all will be easy.

8. Carry, in a convenient pocket, a note-book and pencil, with which to keep a record of your progress, and such naturalistic observations as may seem worthy of preserving.

9. When a bird is hit, note just how you drew, aimed, and loosed, and try to repeat the success.

It is only by *intelligent watchfulness and perseverance* that perfect shooting is reached.

Let us now have a bout after larger birds in one of the charming hunting-places of the far South.

CHAPTER IV.

BOW-SHOOTING ON THE ST. JOHN'S.

ALL day long we had been going at a snail's pace on the brown, placid surface of the St. John's River, not unfrequently having to resort to the oars to help our shoulder-of-mutton sail out of a dead calm. The sky was clear, and the sun had been shining with a power not usual even in Florida, which, connected with the fact that we had not seen a live thing since morning—a few ducks flying overhead excepted—had made the time wear slowly away; and it was with a feeling of pleasant relief that, just as the moon began to struggle with the twilight, we turned into a lazy little creek between high walls of trees, and, by a short run, found a fine camping-place on the south bank.

Cæsar, ever on the watch to do something clever, had stowed away in the boat's little hold a pile of pine-knots; with some of these he soon started a bright fire, by the light of which we pitched our tent and made ready for the night. Will and I oiled and rubbed our bows, and assorted our supply of

arrows for the morrow's sport, while Cæsar broiled some bacon and a large trout (bass) for our supper. The moon, though but a crescent, shone brightly enough in the open places; but our tent was in a place of dense shade, and our flaring fire did fantastic work as it dashed its tricksy light among the great tree-trunks and vines and pendent mosses, and shot it across the creek in long, tapering fingers that caressed, in a weird way, the tall aquatic grasses and the matted lily-pads. Just the faintest swashing sound came up from the borders of the stream, to mingle with the voice of the pines, a clump of which crowned a little swell to the southward. Overhead mighty live-oaks spread their boughs, hung here and there with long curtains of gray Spanish moss.

"How hungry one gets with a few hours' fast in the open air!" said Will, munching a cracker. "How delightfully aggravating the smell of broiling bacon! I believe this sort of life has a tendency to make an animal of a man! Why it's all I can do to restrain an impulse now to whinny for my food like a hungry horse!"

"And the coffee, too," said I, feeling the fascination of the subject—"and the coffee, too, sends out a most persuasive odor."

Cæsar rolled his big white eyes in our direction, and suggested that as for him, he was literally

starving for a baked 'possum. Broiled bacon was a snare and a delusion, and fish was dry food at best. We all did ample honor to the supper, however, and, after a pipe, we sought rest. Cæsar and Will took their respective places in the tent, but I swung my hammock between two trees, and, as was my custom, placed my bow and quiver alongside of me.

My big hound, brought with me from Jacksonville, came and curled himself into a knot right under me, and was soon snoring away most resonantly. The breeze, which had freshened a little since dark, was strong enough now to blow away the few mosquitoes, and I soon fell into a sweet sleep, with a cluster of stars looking down at me through a rift in a dense mass of vines and foliage above. Indeed, so calm and refreshing was my slumber that it seemed I had scarcely dozed when I was startled by a terrible rush made by the dog, the noise of which was mingled with the falling of the tent, and some profound anathemas by Will and Cæsar as they struggled out from under the collapsed canvas.

I snatched my bow and quiver and leaped to the ground just as the hound began to whine most piteously in a bay thicket a few yards off. An animal of some sort was punishing him severely, and the peculiar cry of a catamount at bay left no doubt

as to what it was. The tent had been hastily and insecurely pitched, and the dog, making his rush at the cat, had brought it down about the ears of my companions. Snuffing a smell of fun in the air, I sprang into my rubber boots, buckled on my quiver and pistol, strung my bow, and in much less time than it takes to write it, was plashing through the water in the direction of the dog, which was now baying loudly, evidently keeping at a respectful distance from his enemy. When I had almost reached the spot they made another break, and away they went, the dog mouthing broadly at every jump, making the sober old woods ring with the stirring music.

I tore after them through the slush and brush, cheering them lustily. Will and Cæsar followed, as I could tell by their loud shouts. A run of a half mile brought me up with the hound. I found him barking and snapping savagely in the centre of a circular tuft of water-bushes, on the top of a clump of which I saw the catamount in a crouching attitude, its eyes flaming, its hair erect, and its claws spread, the very picture of fury. I was within forty feet of it before I was aware of the fact. I recoiled before the glare of its fierce eyes. The animal really looked twice its natural size. My nerve came to me in a moment, however, and I hastily made ready for a shot. Fixing a broad-

headed arrow to the string, I centred my gaze full in the face of the cat, and drew steadily till I felt the barb touch my left knuckles—this told me I had put on a weight equal to eighty pounds—and then I let go. No doubt I was a little excited, but I did not make a bad shot. The arrow struck the animal's ear, and cutting across the back of its neck passed through the point of its shoulder. You have seen a flying-squirrel spread itself out as thin as a bit of buckskin, and sail slowly off from the top of a tree. Well, like a huge flying squirrel, wounded, infuriated, terrible, that catamount transformed itself into a monster bat, and sailed right out into the air towards me. I shall never forget the appearance of the thing's eyes, as it shot level along the tops of those scrubby little trees, somewhat lower than my head. Of course it fell short of me, but, for the second or two that it remained in the air I was sure it would strike me full in the face. As it crashed down through the bush I took to my heels, and fled ignobly until I gained an open space. The dog followed me, with the huge cat charging at his heels. I let go another shaft, but in my haste made a clear miss. The hound, emboldened by my stand, turned now and began snapping at his pursuer. At this moment Will reached the ground and lodged an arrow in the cat's flank, while it was so close to me that I

shot it twice with my pistol, being unable to use my bow. The dog gave it a yank or two, and Will got another arrow in about the middle of its long body. This weakened it somewhat, and gave me a chance to make a centre-drop with a round-point right through its shoulder. Cæsar rushed in at this juncture and closed the tragedy by a few tremendous blows with a long pine-knot. Although the catamount was an enormous one, I am surprised whenever I think of the sturdy fight he made.

After a few moments given to discussing the battle, Cæsar proceeded to get up a light and skin our victim, while a big owl hooted a doleful requiem in a dense jungle of cypress and rubber hard by. When we returned to camp we were too much stirred up to sleep, so we had an early breakfast, and by the first glimmer of daylight we went aboard, heading our boat up the creek. By ten o'clock we had reached a little lake covering some hundreds of acres, rimmed round with live-oaks here and cypress there, and dotted with lettuce-islands and stretches of lily-pads. We saw a large number of great, snowy herons flapping about in the distance, a few great blue herons, and many of the lesser fry of the same interesting family. I had never killed a snowy heron, nor had Will, and this little expedition had been fitted up for the purpose

of bagging some. We had boasted to a friend or two that we would never return till we came well loaded with plumes. Few persons, not sportsmen or naturalists, can fully understand the peculiar difficulty of our self-imposed task. Even an excellent woodsman (and a trained sportsman though he be, and armed with the best fire-arms) can rarely, by any cunning, get within long range of these beautiful birds. How much more difficult, then, for us, armed with the long-since discarded weapons of antiquity, to approach the wary game! But the apparent improbability of our succeeding made the undertaking the more attractive, for we loved our weapons, and had all confidence in our craft and marksmanship. We had brought two small sectional skiffs with us, just large enough to bear one man. In these we proposed to offer battle to the snowy herons. We found a delightful camping-spot near the southeastern shore of the lake. Here we pitched our tent, and also constructed a large shed or open lodge, which we thatched with palmetto-leaves. Over this camp we left Cæsar to rule supreme, and having made everything ready, we put out, early on the second morning, each in his skiff, with a day's rations and a full case of light barbed-arrows and a dozen or so of heavy broad-heads. We took different courses. Mine lay to the northwest of our camp, up an arm of the

lake, which here received a sluggish runlet, across the mouth of which, in very shoal water, a huge mass of lettuce had drifted. On either hand some tall old cypress trees stood with their knees just above the water, and a little farther west a stretch of great aquatic weeds ran in a narrow line parallel with the shore, leaving just enough channel to receive my skiff. In this place I anchored, finding the water only four feet deep in the middle. I quietly settled my theory for shooting herons, and was now about to test it by a practical experiment. On the day before, I had noticed that two fine snowy fellows made it convenient to alight on a certain bare, dead tree about sixty yards distant from where I had thus stationed myself. This they had done so often and regularly that I suspected they had established their resting-place and point of lookout midway of their flight from one extremity of the lake to another.

I hoped, thus shielded by the line of tall grass and weeds, to get a shot or two. I lay down in my skiff, my head resting on a roll of moss, and having lit my pipe, contentedly waited and watched. A pleasant breeze was sweeping the lake, making a soft rustle in the weeds, while over in the woods a little way a cardinal-bird, so seldom seen in Florida, was singing his shrill, cheery song. So sweet it was to rest there, with the wind pour-

ing over me and the water washing under, that I cared little whether a snowy heron ever flew my way or not. I was absorbing health and dreamful bliss through every pore of my body, and the blue wreaths from my pipe, as they floated upward and away, ring fading after ring, were enough to engage my whole attention.

But presently a small alligator thrust his ugly nose out of the water hard by, and a big moccasin snake glided along the slimy edge of the weeds. Then a snake-bird, a foul, funny biped, dropped into the shoal, coffee-like liquid of a miniature lagoon, twisting himself into a thousand ludicrous contortions, till he looked like nothing but a neck tied in a double bow-knot. Once I saw, dimly, far across what seemed leagues of sheeny water, a young deer, scarcely small enough to be called a fawn, slip like a shadow through an opening and disappear, the merest hint of what the forest might hold. Now and then a swell from the lake, which the breeze had shaken up, came round into my retreat and rocked me gently, as if the happy water with its finger-tips was barely able to reach me. Sparrow-hawks wheeled about overhead, giving out their peculiar cry, and a little green-winged warbler lit on the feathery tip of a grass-leaf, balancing himself adroitly, and rocking to and fro with his quizzical eyes turned down at me, twittering all

the time a monotonous round of three or four notes. Somewhere, far in a dark recess, of course, a big owl, with a voice that revelled in the lowest possible register, was doing a solo that ended in a wild, maniacal laugh.

I lay there for perhaps two hours, revelling in the quietest of all contentment, and was aroused at last by a snowy heron flying so low and so near me that I fancied I felt the air wafted from his broad-spreading wings, the satin-like sound of which filled my ears with music. I could have killed him on the wing had I been ready. But there lay my bow unstrung, and there I lay stretched out in my boat. I got myself rapidly and noiselessly into position, and strung my bow. As I had hoped, the bird rose as he neared one of the dead trees, and alighted on a high, broken branch, making it quiver with his weight. I had a fair view of him through a notch-like rift in the wall of grass and weeds, and, actually trembling with excitement, I drew to the head and let fly. What a wild shot! the arrow sang through the air high above him, missing him fully ten feet! Contrary to my fears, he did not take to wing, but simply turned his head to one side and glanced at the arrow as it passed. He did not dream of my proximity. Again I let go, this time cutting the air close to his beautiful neck. He jerked his head, but did not move a wing.

What a glorious weapon the long-bow is! I must say it, and say it often, and urge it strenuously, this is the most delightful of the sporting implements. There I was within sixty or eighty yards of a great snowy heron, with two shots at it, and still it sat there! What if I had been armed with a rifle? The first shot would have frightened the game into a spasm of flight! But there he sat, all unconscious of me, till I shot twice, thrice, four, five times, the arrows whisking past, tipping the outmost down of his feathers and rounding over to drop with a sharp cluck into the lake beyond. My arm had got steady now, and I drew my sixth arrow with great confidence, my eyes fixed on the butt of the great bird's right wing. It was a shot to delight the gods. The dull recoil-sound of my bow was followed by a quick whisper, and then a dead, solid blow, a "chuck" once heard never forgotten. The feathers puffed out and sailed slowly away in a widening ring. The big wings opened wide and quivered a moment, then the grand old fellow toppled over and came straight down with a loud plash into the water. I yelled like a savage—I couldn't help it; it stirred me to the core.

I hastily weighed my little anchor, but none too soon, for I saw two alligators, with their rusty noses out of water, striking out for my bird. If

ever a man made a skiff fly I did that one. The very thought of losing my bird infuriated me. I reached it first, and the alligators began swimming round in a circle. I gave one of them a bodkin-point in the throat, causing him to turn some wonderful somersaults and to beat the water into a stiff foam. I lifted my snowy heron into the skiff. It was a magnificent bird, full-plumed and in perfect health.

It was now noon, and, feeling hungry, I rowed to a palmetto-point a quarter of a mile east, and went ashore to broil a slice of bacon. I had just started a little fire of palm-leaf stems when Will joined me, having seen me land. He had killed a young swamp-rabbit, which we dressed and roasted, finding it a most toothsome bit. My bird was too much for Will. He stripped a side from one of the wing feathers and bound it to an arrow, in token of a vow not to leave the lake till he, too, had bagged a snowy heron. I frankly told him that, if he stuck to his vow, I thought he would live to be eighty and die on the lake without accomplishing his very sportsmanlike desire.

After a rest of two hours, we again separated, each choosing his way and going off full of dreams of the snowy heron. But I got into a raft of duck, and came near shooting away a whole case of arrows at them with miserable luck, only killing

five. I returned to camp before sundown, finding Cæsar highly delighted. He had seen a flock of wild turkeys. I set him to work immediately skinning my bird, a thing he could do to perfection. Will came in after dark, with a rail and two or three beautiful wood-ducks, but no heron. He was gone next morning before I was awake. As for me, when I was awake, I did not get up, or rather down, but lay there swinging in the breeze, caring for nothing but comfort. I made Cæsar bring me a cup of coffee and my pipe. I hung over the side of my hammock and sipped the rich brown beverage till its cheering effect tingled in every nerve from lip to toe; then I let fall the cup and took the pipe to smoke off the influence of the coffee. I dropped to sleep again with the amber between my lips. Some time later I was startled by Cæsar, who began a loud shouting all of a sudden.

"Oh, lookee! lookee! He's after 'em, he'll git 'em, shuah! Lookee! lookee! golly! ki! Lookee, mars, he's after 'em! J'ruselem! but don't he pull dat boat for de Lor' sake! Dat's jis as good as his bird right now! Lookee! lookee!"

The excited negro was prancing around like one possessed, pointing out on the lake, and it needed but a glance to see what he meant, for there, midway in the rippling sheet of water, was Will in full

chase of a snowy heron, which was evidently very sorely wounded. I had only to lie there and watch the sport. The bird, which, as I afterwards learned, had been stricken through the wing between the bones without breaking either, held out bravely, flapping along on the water at a good round rate of speed. Will would row awhile, then drop the oars and shoot. Finally he bowled it over and dragged it into his skiff. As I expected, he yelled like a steam-whistle as soon as he handled his bird. I took another cup of coffee, and was sound asleep again when he came in. His prize was not so large as mine, but its plumage was even finer. In the afternoon, having "caught up" my lost sleep, I pulled out again, and had some rare luck; for although I did not even see a white heron, I killed a blue one of enormous size, and made a charming shot, knocking over a black woodpecker from my skiff high up in the boughs of a pine tree on shore.

I believe I am not the first observer to remark the singular fact that all wild birds at times suddenly, and it might be said mysteriously, congregate in a particular spot, irrespective of species or order. In a Western forest, for example, one may, at one hour of the day, range up and down without seeing a feather or hearing a note. The trees are deserted, the underbrush is abandoned. A few

minutes or hours later the same region will be alive with an almost countless variety of birds, small and large. Standing on one spot, the observer may count a half-dozen different kinds of woodpecker; the blue-jays will scream, the fly-catchers, the nut-hatches, and thrushes, and wrens, the warblers, and the finches, cardinal-birds and bluebirds, robins and chewinks, and on through the catalogue, will all be visible and audible, appearing so suddenly that one half decides that all of them have, on one impulse, sprung from hiding-places there on the spot.

So it happened late that afternoon, as I slowly pushed my skiff through the sinuous ways of the lily-pads and stiff water-weeds—all at once there came a storm of birds. First a flock of ducks, then a line of cranes, a small flock of geese next, and then I could not count what I saw. Herons labored this way and that; scaup-ducks whistled through the air; the little buffle-heads went by like gayly feathered darts; gannets and curlews displayed their long wings and contrasting colors as they sped past, while all about, in every direction, the little rails, and still smaller aquatic birds, flitted among the rushes, or stood as if on tiptoe atop of the bonnets. Wood-ducks, those gorgeous beauties, swam in their dainty but stately way across the dimly shaded avenues below the pen-

dent air-plants ; and now and then a bright, trim teal would cut the water like a sword, from one clump of brush to another. The bass, too, as if catching the prevailing spirit of the hour, leaped up among the pads, making the small fry spin in every direction. Narrow-winged hawks shot hither and thither, turning their heavy heads from side to side ; and little flocks of snipe whirled down into a small prairie to the southward. Right in the midst of this confusion of game, I met Will in his skiff, emerging from one of those dim little lanes of water that everywhere set into the forests from the lake. He had killed a small turkey-hen, but had a lively run for it after clipping it through the very centre of its lungs. He was mud from head to foot.

One would think that we ought to have had some extraordinary sport during the hour of daylight that now remained for us ; but, though our part of the lake was thus teeming with game, the birds were so watchful, so cautious and shy, that all kept cleverly beyond bow-shot. We wasted many arrows on promising wing-shots, but it may as well be understood that hitting a flying bird with an arrow is more like accident than admirable skill. To be sure, a goose or a crane at thirty yards is not difficult to bring to a stop, but it is only the rarest chance that one gets such an opportunity. Occa-

sionally, when we started a raft of duck from some weed-circled pool, an arrow slung at random through the thickest of the flock would send back to our ears the short, sudden sound of a hit, and the victim, strung midway of the shaft, would come whirling down, to beat the water a moment with his wings and die. Much oftener, however, our missiles would, by some inexplicable manœuvre, find their way through the dense mass of the flock, without so much as tipping a feather. Once a half-dozen gannet came round a point of woods, flying very low, and were right upon us before they saw us or we them. They turned suddenly, with a loud sound of wings, but Will, who had a shaft ready, let fly, hitting one a dead blow "amid-breast," bringing him to a short stop and settling him beautifully. This ended our luck; we shot and shot, but hit nothing, and finally, weary and armsore, pulled back to camp, on arriving at which we found Cæsar the most woe-begone and disconsolate negro in the world. Somehow, he had let our tent get on fire and burn up, together with our box of crackers. Fortunately, however, he saved our bird-skins and our chemicals. Poor fellow! his eyes were wonderfully enlarged, and he had severely burned one of his hands; but when he saw that I was not offended he brightened up and set us a good supper, barring the lack of bread.

We lingered at the lake for two weeks longer, after having sent Cæsar to a landing on the St. John's, where, from a passing steamer, he succeeded in getting a keg of hard-tack.

One day, devoted by Will to feathering a lot of shafts, I got out my fishing-tackle to try the bass, or trout, as the Southerners call them. Of course I took my bow and a case of arrows along, but my object was to test some flies of my own make. Directly across the lake from our camp, at the mouth of a little run, was a place that seemed to me just the feeding-ground for trout, and a most delightful spot in which to dream away a half-day with rod and line. I was not prepared at all for the result of my excursion. Never have I seen such voracious, such utterly rapacious fish. I spun out my fly, dropping it between the lily-pads; and I think it only half-touched the water when a trout (black bass) took it like a steel-trap, and hanging himself thoroughly, showed fight from the start. He fouled my line at once, and then began a series of gymnastic feats, in the water and out of it, that made a great circle of bubbles and foam on the rippling surface. I finally had to shoot him, and lost a full half-hour disengaging my line.

I now saw I must give my game no line, and forthwith I began to haul it in on a short pull, till nineteen, averaging three pounds each, lay in the

bottom of my skiff. These were as many as we could use at camp, so I desisted; but I am sure I could have taken many more. If the water had been free of bonnets, and brush, and roots, and lettuce, and what not of obstructions, the sport would have been delightful.

On my way back to camp I made a shot that a rifleman might equal, but never excel. Seeing a male wood-duck of magnificent plumage swim across a little opening and dart under some great drooping aquatic leaves, I circled round the spot till I saw his bright head shining through a small circular rift not larger than the palm of one's hand. I was standing in my skiff, pushing it through the shoal water by poling with an oar, and I had to put down the latter and string my bow. Doing this I lost sight of the rift. No one but a sportsman knows the difficulty in discovering such a mark once lost. I looked with "all my eyes," to no effect. There were the pads and the lush (no word like "lush") grass-leaves and the overhanging water-bushes, but the rift was gone. It must have been fully fifteen minutes' time I spent puzzling over this mysterious disappearance; then for a moment a hawk darting by called my eyes away, and on looking again, lo! there was the rift, and there was my wood-duck's head plain as could be. How could I have overlooked it even for a mo-

ment? So intent was I in making the shot I did not notice I had selected a broad-headed arrow. Balancing myself in the skiff, I drew the full twenty-eight inches and let go. No knife could have cut that duck's head in two at the eyes more nicely than did that arrow. The distance was about sixty feet.

Broiled trout for supper and a song from Cæsar, then Will and I discussed the merits of a plan for a night-visit to a little prairie about a mile distant, in the marshy places of which we had seen numberless tracks of deer. The moon was now a little past the full, and just struggling up in the east. It would be almost as light as day. By the time I had finished my pipe we had determined to go. Quivers were buckled on, and filled with select arrows, rubber-boots donned, and the march commenced. I lashed the hound to my belt, contrary to Will's judgment, and made him follow at my heels. I calculated that we would need him, and calculated correctly. True, he was rather unmanageable at first, bent on flying off at a tangent whenever we crossed the trail of a wild thing, but, by dint of coaxing, scolding, and at last a sound beating, I subdued him.

The prairie reached, I took my stand in the dusky shadow of a clump of palms, near what seemed a favorable run, while Will beat stealthily

round the edge of the opening, which was about twenty acres in extent, and fringed for the most of its perimeter with dense jungle. Making the hound crouch at my feet, I leaned on my bow, and, while waiting developments, gave myself up to the enjoyment of the scene.

The landscape was one of singular weirdness, every feature strangely affected by the oblique rays of the moon. In some places on the farther wall of woods the long moss looked like festoons of pale gold, while at others it was dusky almost to blackness, swinging across dim openings like the deadly snares of some night monster. Nearer, and in the strong light, graceful vines and air-plants in full flower let fall their airy sprays set in the rugged framing of gnarled branches and twisted trunks. The silence was utter. Not even an owl was heard. The grassy stretch of the little prairie, dotted here and there with palms, singly or in clusters, standing out singularly sharp, made one think of pictures of the far East, that old land of palms and ruins. Now and then as I would get a glimpse of Will gliding noiselessly along the border, his bow in his left hand, an arrow in his right, and his quiver at his side, the picture became a perfect antique underscored with snatches from the old poets.

Suddenly, through the stillness and silence, from

a dark angle of the border, the peculiar muffled sound of a bow's recoil, and distinctly the thin hiss of a flying arrow, ending with a deadly thud. I raised my bow and listened. The hound gave out a sharp whine, and was eager to be off. I kicked him down, and then I plainly heard the noise of bounding feet — Will pursuing something. The next moment I saw a deer coming at a slashing run right upon me. In a second I loosed the dog, and he parted from me like a bolt, meeting the deer abreast, and dragging it to the ground within ten steps of me ; but it shook him off, and gained the jungle before I could fix an arrow. The hound followed. A yell from Will attracted my attention, and, looking out on the prairie, I saw him racing after another deer, in whose head I could distinctly see an arrow. The animal, blinded and crazy from an oblique shot in the eye, was rearing and plunging this way and that, while Will was evidently trying to get hold of it.

"Run here! Oh, run here quick! I've lost my quiver—quick, quick!" he shouted, slashing round after the game with the energy of desperation.

I gave a few shrill blasts on my whistle for the dog, and ran out to join in the chase. As soon as I was near enough I drove an arrow into the animal's body, but this seemed rather to bring it to

life than otherwise, for now it suddenly sped off on a right line. The dog came up just in time and overtook it, dragging it down at the edge of the jungle and holding it till I had put an arrow through its heart. Will was exhausted. The deer —two of them—had stepped into the edge of the prairie within twenty feet of him. He shot hurriedly, and hit one in the head, knocking it clear over. Running up to it, he took hold of its foreleg to turn it upon its back, thinking to cut its throat, when it began to struggle, and in some way broke his quiver-belt, so that his arrows fell to the ground. Then it dragged him some distance, and finally freed itself. He followed it, bow in hand, for some time, not knowing the loss of his quiver. This discovered, he could not go back to hunt it, so he followed the deer on, hoping to get hold of it again. He had to acknowledge that my hound was not so bad, after all. We found his quiver after a short search; then tying the deer's feet together and swinging it on a pole, we lugged it into camp.

As we trudged along with our game hanging between us all bristling with arrows, I fancied we looked like a couple of foresters in the merry days of Richard Cœur de Lion—say Friar Tuck and Robin Hood making preparations for a feast.

When the time came for us to bid farewell to our

little lake, Will and Cæsar volunteered to pole the boat down the stream by which we had entered, allowing me to follow at leisure in my skiff. It was early morning; and, feeling that some vigorous exercise would not hurt me, I pulled round the circle of the lake's shore, snatching some farewell shots, and completing some sketches of water-plants, in which I had been greatly interested. While pulling my way through a sort of elbow thicket, I discovered a very singular-looking bird skulking about under some long, arching blades of water-grass; it had much the appearance of a wood-duck, but out of the centre of its back, at an angle of about forty-five degrees, a strange appendage, tipped with a tuft of bright scarlet feathers, protruded in an unnatural way. The motion of the bird was awkward in the extreme, and it seemed that it was with the utmost effort that it moved at all. I bowled it over at the second shot, and, on securing it, found that it was nothing but a wood-duck after all, with one of Will's light-barbed arrows worn in its back for ornament. The shaft had been in the wound several days.

It is one of the peculiarities of your true archer, that he shoots at anything in the shape of bird or wild animal that presents itself. With him "all fish is game" in the broadest sense. Having a bunch of light deal arrows with me, I began practising on

the redwing blackbirds that now and then perched within easy shot on the "bonnets" of the lilies, and so utterly oblivious of everything else did I become, that it was like being startled from a dream when a great blue heron sprang heavily into the air from a little tussock in the midst of a clump of water-growing shrubs, not more than twenty-five feet from me. My arm was in good training, however. Instinctively I let fly at him just as he made a half-turn, and poised himself for a vigorous sweep. The light arrow struck him somewhere about the thigh, and remained stiffly sticking in the wound. The huge bird whirled over and over a few times, and then mounted perpendicularly through the air. Up, up he went. I launched two or three unsuccessful shafts after him, but he heeded them not. Right up he struggled, by a narrow spiral course, till he began to rapidly diminish in apparent size, and finally, after flickering indistinctly on the sky for a time, he utterly vanished. But this was not all. Several minutes afterwards the headless shaft of the arrow came whirling down, and fell near me. It had been broken off close up to the brazing, and was quite bloody. Where did that stricken, powerful bird go to? Did he continue to mount till, suddenly exhausted, he fell with outstretched wings through a long incline into the merciful bosom of some wild

everglade? Or did he go up until his piercing eye discovered that paradise of birds where no archer ever lies in wait? No matter; I lost a beautiful tuft of plumes by his energy and pluck. I lingered on the lake long after the happy minstrel song of Cæsar ceased its echoing, or, if heard at all, so indistinctly in the distance that it might have been taken for wind-tones in the vine-clad live-oaks. I was loth to leave the spot. It was an archer's paradise. It might have been a gunner's paradise, too, if fowling-pieces could have been used without noise, but one day's sport with a double-barrel on that little lake would have frightened everything away, excepting, perhaps, the snake-birds and the alligators. Fifty bowmen, even if they could kill as much game as that many sportsmen with shot-guns, would not in two weeks' time drive off and render unapproachable the feathered tribes of a choice hunting-spot, which would be completely cleaned by one man with a blunderbuss in a single day. The sound of a gun is a terror to all wild things, especially fowl. I am ready to admit that, during our somewhat protracted sojourn on the lake, we did not take with our weapons half so much game as either of us could alone have taken with a good gun, but we took enough, and the sport was far better than can be had in any other way—unless the mere destruction of game is sport.

Many days passed during which we did not bend our bows at all, but lay in our skiffs and watched the habits of birds and reptiles, or filled our books with sketches of curious plants, trees, birds, insects, and whatever seemed worth a study. We were troubled very little with mosquitoes, and there were but few over-warm days, while the nights were cool and refreshing, with just breeze enough to rock one to sleep in his hammock.

The one great drawback to all our wanderings on the St. John's and its tributaries was our boat. It was too large for our purpose, and otherwise badly constructed. For days at a time we had to row, and pole, and do everything that is hard, but, after all, whenever we reached a choice spot, which was generally by turning into some tributary, we were doubly repaid for all our toil. So stealthily would we creep into those charming haunts of the feathered tribes, and so noiselessly and systematically did we prosecute our hunting, that all the wild things seemed to recognize us, if at all, as some other wild things, bent, as were they, on procuring food simply. Cæsar presided over our cuisine with marked ability, and in his way enjoyed the life to the full. His skill as a bird-skinner I have never seen equalled, and in this alone he more than saved us his wages and fare. If the reader will allow me for a moment to

come squarely down to sordid considerations, I will just here add that our cruise, so far from being an expensive one, resulted in a net gain of about ten dollars. This was somewhat owing to the accidental exhibition at a Jacksonville hotel of a pair of heron-skins, resulting in their sale to a New York man at an enormous price. He was bent on having them, and offered a sum that I was ashamed to take, it was so large; but Will, in a very business-like way, closed the trade and pocketed the money.

How dreary a thing it is to come back to the humdrum and vexation of business life after four months of freedom, and all the charms of wild camp-life in such a region as Florida! For a time one is restless, and champs the bits of restraint, but all is for the best, and eight months will soon run by. They have run by again and again, and Will and I have drawn the bow on spots in Florida where never a white man fired a gun. Our steel arrow-heads will be found imbedded in the trees of those strange forests a hundred years from now. But to what good? you ask. What good? It is a foolish question. Some men delight in Wall Street. What good? Some men travel in foreign lands. What good? Some delve at the desk, or rant at the forum, or dicker at the counter, year in and year out. What good? It is all good.

CHAPTER V.

HARE, OR RABBIT SHOOTING.

THE hare has always been considered the most timid as well as the most tender of animals. "My hare," was the very softest and sweetest phrase in the Roman language. In the days of the empire, *mi lepus* were the words of endearment breathed into the damsel's ear by the loving youth just ready to don the toga. The reason of this will be well understood by whomsoever has had the exquisite pleasure of devouring a broiled rabbit saddle, served with brown gravy, for breakfast.

The rabbit, or, if we follow the naturalist, the hare, is found everywhere in the eastern part of the United States, from Florida to the great lakes of the north. With us, as a people, the name is rabbit, no matter what the zoölogist may say, and no matter how many varieties may be found; but the hunter knows the gray rabbit from the brown hare as well as he knows a woodcock from a partridge; and the epicure is at once disgusted when he finds that his servant has purchased for his table a long-

legged woods-hare (*Lepus Americanus*) instead of the delicately pencilled gray rabbit (*L. sylvaticus*) he ordered—the difference in flavor and the consistency of the flesh being quite marked.

In the Southern States, where the forests are thickly grown with pine underbrush, rabbits are exceedingly numerous, their paths everywhere crossing and recrossing each other. Taking advantage of this habit of following well-defined trails, the negroes of the South trap and snare large numbers of them.

I will wager you a good bow you miss your first hare, though you may find him crouched in his form not ten paces from you; in fact, while he is a good large mark, he is very difficult to hit before you have learned by experience just how to aim at him.

In still hunting you will generally find him in his form, his body and neck elongated if the weather is fine, contracted if it is cold or windy, his ears pressed flat upon his shoulders, his chin resting on his forefeet; he is fast asleep, with his big black eyes wide open. He looks larger by half than he really is, which is apt to make you shoot carelessly, thinking it easy to hit him. You draw with great deliberation and let drive. Whack! goes your arrow through the grass or weeds in which he lies, but, to your utter amazement, up springs the

frightened rabbit and scuds away, like a bit of gray paper before a gust of wind. You do not get another shot at him. He hunts his hole! Upon examination you find that you have over-shot him, and your arrow is sticking in the ground just beyond his form and slanting back, above and across it, towards you. This is your first and most important lesson in rabbit-shooting. Hereafter you will aim low. Yes, entirely too low; for your next rabbit gets up from his form before you see him, and after a half-dozen long, lazy bounds, squats on his haunches and waits for you to shoot at him. You aim low and let fly, and have the chagrin to see your arrow fall ten feet short! The rabbit resolves himself into an ecstasy of billowy undulation, outrunning the other one by several seconds on the mile, and you are left leaning on your bow, pensively longing for a shot-gun! The third time is the charm, mayhap; you bowl your game over in fine style, and can never feel prouder or happier. A week or two of daily practice in good rabbit-cover will get you well up towards successful shooting at this game.

Rabbits have, especially when wounded, an inexplicable habit of running in a circuit of only a few hundred feet in diameter. I once followed one, according to my notes, seventeen times around the periphery of two acres of brushy land, before

I finally secured him, and often in hunting I have found it a good plan, when a rabbit has been wounded and has made one turn round his circuit, to stand and await his appearance at any point, while another bowman follows on his track. I recollect a singular incident connected with this peculiar habit, so characteristic of the rabbit that I will relate it as illustrative of its foolish simplicity as well as of the untiring energy and dogged persistence of a weasel. I was standing near a worm-fence that inclosed a small patch of wheat just beginning to head, watching for a cock-quail which I was decoying, when a rabbit ran past me, keeping between the fence and the wall of green wheat. It was too late in the season for rabbit-shooting, so I allowed it to go unharmed. To my surprise, in a second or two, a small brown weasel rushed by on the track of the flying game. I hastily sent an arrow at the earnest little thing, but missed it. A few moments elapsed, and the rabbit, having made the circuit of the wheat, again ran by me. I looked sharply out for the weasel and got another hurried shot at him; but in those days I had had little experience in shooting at moving objects, and my arrow ploughed up the ground in front of him. He did not even halt, but running right over the shaft, kept on in full chase of his intended victim. Round and round that little field went pursuer and

pursued, till the circuit had been made no less than a dozen times. Finally, despairing of being able to hit the weasel with an arrow while it was running, I seized a club, and, watching for it again, rushed after it as it passed, intending to overtake and kill it. My movement, while it did not in the least discomfit or startle the weasel, caused the rabbit to break into the wheat and start diagonally across the field, and the weasel following, both were at once out of my sight. In less than ten seconds I heard the rabbit squeal, and knew the race was over, the wheat having impeded the flight of the larger animal without being any hindrance to that of the smaller. Hurrying to the spot I found the rabbit with its throat cut and the weasel complacently sucking the blood from the wound. My cudgel soon made an end of the little vampire.

In a Southern woods, hare-shooting by moonlight is fine sport. You must be able to hit your game as it scuds past you at a leisurely lope or full run. The spot to be chosen is an open glade where the woods-hares (*Lepus Americanus*) congregate to play in the sand or to chase each other back and forth. You select a bush for cover and await your chance for a shot. Of course it requires nice skill to enable you to aim just far enough ahead of your bounding game, but you

can soon acquire it, and it will be surprising how often you will hit.

Mr. Hansard recommends hunting rabbits with a spaniel trained to the bow. He says: "All the world has probably seen or heard of Britton Ferry, a magnificent sea-view near Swansea, on the shores of Glamorganshire. The road thence to the Ferry passes over about four miles of beautiful velvet turf, called the 'Burrows;' and although patches of yellow blossoming gorse are scattered here and there, in general it is a plain, bare and level as a bowling-green. Thousands of rabbits inhabit this charming spot, and a better situation for an archer to acquire dexterity I do not believe exists. It will greatly enhance the pleasure of this sport, if the archer provide himself with a brace of dwarf spaniels, or beagles of the smallest size, which must be broken especially to the bow, just as the falconer trains the setter for his peculiar sport. When brought to hunt within twenty or thirty yards of the archer's feet, they may be considered sufficiently under command. If a rabbit gets up and runs in a direct line from the shooter, he may aim somewhat before its head; the same allowance holds good for a cross shot; but for all this I cannot lay down any precise rules, because the distance varies, according to the power of the bow, which, for flying or running shots, should be rather below the shooter's strength."

The English archers used to keep two choice bows each ; one for war—very heavy—and one for hunting—"weak and slender." This because, in war, long range and great penetration of shaft was required, and in hunting quickness of cast and perfect manageability were preferred to great power and consequent cumbersomeness.

From forty to fifty pounds is a good weight for a small-game hunting-bow. If you are very strong and agile, you may use one of sixty or seventy pounds draw.

For rabbit-shooting use light, but broad-headed arrows, sharp-pointed and barbed (see Appendix).

CHAPTER VI.

BOW-SHOOTING WITH A HERMIT.

WE were scarcely aware of the coming of a squall till it struck us and reversed our sail, as a side flaw almost always does when an incompetent person is at the helm. I remember that the boom struck me a sharp rap on the head as it swept around, and in a moment we were driven upon the sand-bar and our boat capsized. We had barely time enough to snatch up our bows and leap out before this occurred, and then a big wave swept over us with great force, landing us all in a heap on the bar, where it left us high and out of water, but by no means dry. Our boat must have foundered, for we never saw it again. We all had presence of mind enough to leap up and run to a point above the reach of the next wave.

Will had lost his quiver, with all his arrows, in the struggle, and Cæsar, our negro man-of-all-work, had allowed the sea to swallow our haversack, provisions and all. My arrows, however, thirty-four of them, were safe at my side, and our bows

were uninjured notwithstanding the water, they having been oiled that very morning.

"Now, look what you've done, Cæsar!" cried Will, in stentorian tones, addressing the already terribly-frightened African. "Look what you've done, you black scapegrace! Why didn't you keep the boat before the wind? I've a mind to thrash the ground with you!"

"N—n—neber m—mind, Mars Will; I—I's done kill a'ready!—neck broke for sho! Ki, what a bref ob wedder dat was! Dis chile not gwine stan' 'sponsible for sich oncommon whirly gusts as dat, I tell you now!"

After this little word-passage, we all three stood gazing stupidly at each other, the wind almost lifting us from our feet, and the water streaming down our persons. It may as well be understood that we were in a rather startling predicament, literally "cast upon an uninhabited island," with no boat in which to leave it, and with not a soul in the world likely to search for us. But I do not desire to appear sensational in writing this matter-of-fact sketch, and I am sure that after the first excitement of our shipwreck had subsided, we took our disaster in very good part. In fact, Will laughed immoderately, and if any one of us was really frightened, it was Cæsar. Nevertheless, the predicament remained. Our camp was some five miles

away, on the mainland, and hidden from our view by a cluster of diminutive islands. Our boat was gone, and there we stood, three as utter exiles as ever storm had banished.

The gale was most furious for an hour or so, and then it subsided almost as suddenly as it had risen. We sat down upon the sand to rest after our struggle with the elements, our faces to the sea, and our backs towards the frondous tuft of trees crowning the central swell of the island.

The waves were singing a grand song, and flinging up their white hands as if keeping time to the music. The sun was barely above the eastern horizon, and now, as the clouds broke away, he threw athwart the rushy islands and the heaving waters a flood of soft splendor not unlike that of a Northern Indian summer. A few white gulls flew wildly about, drifting down the wind, and skimming the summits of the white-caps. The pleasant exhilaration attendant on adventure took possession of me, and as I sat there, with the roar of the sea dinning in my ears, I thought of Selkirk and Robinson Crusoe, and half wished that some of their experiences might befall us.

We looked in vain for any sign of our boat. Not even a splinter cheered our eyes. Far southward, once I thought I caught sight of a sail, but I was not sure. We all remained silent a long

time, and I had just begun a study of Cæsar's lugubrious profile, when Will, the most practical of men, suggested that we might find a pleasanter place to discuss our accident by an exploration of our island. This started Cæsar from his reverie, and getting upon our feet, we took our way along the ridge of sand towards the timbered part of the hummock, a half mile west of us. The water "slushed" in our boots, and the sand made our progress very toilsome; but we persevered, and soon entered a rushy tide-swale, through which we floundered to a gentle slope strewed with tufts of Spanish bayonet and occasional palm-trees. Toiling up this slope, we came into a beautiful grove of palmettos, set on a considerable bluff overlooking a calm stretch of land-sheltered water, beyond which lay the low line of the Florida coast. The sun was now high enough to begin to heat the air, and at Cæsar's suggestion we took off our clothes, wrung the water from them, and hung them up to dry. Having no change of garments, we had to lie around quite naked till nearly noon before the sun and wind had done their work sufficiently. This was just to Cæsar's taste, and he sought out the sunniest spot to be found, where he stretched himself at full length, and slept that oleaginous sleep that only a negro can know, with his face half buried in the hot sand. As for me, I man-

aged to dry some tobacco, and, going out on the nose of the bluff, sat down under a bushy pine and lighted my pipe; for, thanks to my box, my matches were uninjured. From this position I could see a long crescent of the island, fringed with rushes and tall flag-like grass, and here and there densely wooded, running close between two smaller bars that seemed barely disconnected from the mainland. Large flocks of water-fowl, sweeping down at a certain point between two tufts of forest, told me plainer than words could that a sheltered estuary thereabout offered a feeding-place for the birds, and I felt sure of some rare sport if the spot could be reached. But how to reach it? In my then condition the question was too abstruse for me, so I contented myself watching the broad, liberal face of the water smiling so sweetly and benignly back at the now cloudless and peaceful sky. Through the thin wreaths of smoke floating up from my pipe, I had a dreamy vision, for a time, of rays of splendor parted into fine, gossamer-like shreds, and then I fell into a sweet slumber, lying there with the salt breeze blowing over my free limbs, and the song of the sea gently pouring through my dream.

"Boat ahoy!"

I turned in my sleep and half awoke.

"Boat a-h-o-y!"

I sprang to my feet. The sun was almost to the meridian, and the sea was like a sheet of glass. Will and Cæsar had fully dressed themselves, and, having tied my shirt to a long stick, the latter was waving it frantically, while the former shouted at the top of his voice:

"Boat a-h-o-y!"

And presently there came a thin, clear shout in response, from a long, low skiff, which, with a single individual as captain and crew, was hugging the dusky fringe of a marsh a half-mile away.

I picked up my pipe and ran down to my companions, as I saw the little vessel set her prow in our direction, and got into my clothes as quickly as possible.

"Capital luck — capital luck!" cried Will. "We'll hire the fellow to take us back to Berkley's!"

The man pulled towards us very leisurely, and when he had come to within a bow-shot of us, he backed his oars, and swinging a heavy double-barreled shot-gun across his lap, called out:

"Well, what's wantin'?"

"We want to get away from here," cried Will. "We were in the squall this morning, and had our boat wrecked, and we're here in a sort of tight fix!"

"Well, who are ye?" was the response in a half growl, the tones of which rasped across the

water like a file. He bowed his head, as he spoke, as if in deep thought.

"We're a party from over at Berkley's," I answered, "and we want to get back there. We'll pay you well for your trouble if you'll pull us over."

"What's them you've got in yer hands?"

"Long-bows."

"What d'ye say?"

"Bows—bows and arrows."

"Things to shoot with?"

"Yes."

We heard the fellow mutter something as if to himself, and then he let go a roar of laughter that set his boat to rocking, and fairly startled us with its suddenness and intensity.

"Bows an' arrers, did ye say?"

"To be shuah," put in Cæsar; "to be shuah, and dey out-shoot yer blame ole shot-gun, too, I tell ye now!"

The man laughed again, and then taking his oars he pulled up, and very promptly came ashore. He was a little, wiry fellow, sixty years old, perhaps, but apparently none the worse for wear. His hair was stiff, long, and iron-gray, as were also his beard and eyebrows. He was dressed in a shirt and trowsers of coarse cotton cloth, resembling ordinary bed-ticking, and had on an old, greasy otter-skin cap. His feet were clothed in a sort of

moccasin-boot, evidently of his own make. His shot-gun, a very long one, was of fine English manufacture, number ten gauge, and of about thirteen pounds weight.

"Well, well, how d'ye all do?" said he, looking curiously from one to another of us, and letting his eyes at last fix themselves upon Will's six-foot-six-inch snakewood bow, a beautifully-finished weapon.

We responded very civilly, and proceeded to explain more particularly our disaster and the nature of our predicament. He listened apparently with much interest. When the story was finished, he winked at me and said:

"Got any terbacker 'bout yer ole clothes?"

"Ole clothes!" repeated Cæsar, with a chuckle. "Like to know what'm call good clothes—yah—yah—yah!"

I promptly offered my pouch, but found that it was chewing-tobacco he wanted.

"Here, Cæsar," said Will, "out with your dog-leg, and let this gentleman have a chew."

The negro good-naturedly obeyed, producing a long, black twist of Old Virginia.

"That's the docyment," cried the man delightedly, "that's the docyment, darkey. We'll jest divide this 'ere weed right here." So saying he drew a large knife and severed the twist, handing

back to Cæsar about one-third of the smaller end thereof. Then depositing an enormous quid in his mouth, he added:

"That's the cl'ar stuff, darkey, cl'ar stuff. Thanky, boy, thanky."

Cæsar grinned confusedly, seeing how his store of precious creature comfort was diminished, but made no remark.

"I s'pose you've not got no sich thing es a flask of the j'yful juice, nor nothin', eh?" (another knowing wink).

I replied that unfortunately we had nothing of the sort.

"Well, well, that can't be holp, I s'pose, but a drop of the stuff wouldn't be onwholesome, 'bout now," he added.

"The next thing," said Will, "is to get you to pull us back to Berkley's. What do you say?"

"Well, I don't know. It's too hot jest now. We mought as well lay around in the shade here till towards evening an' talk the matter over. It's a good ten miles from here to Berkley's, an' I'm not gwine to try that agin both wind an' tide an' right in the heat of the day, too."

"But will you agree to take us? We're in no hurry to be off, that I know of, excepting that we might get rather hungry."

"Never mind about something to eat," said the

old fellow. "I've got grub enough for us all in my hamper yonder. Br'iled fish, duck, an' a little bread, an' a few oranges. S'pose we can make out, 'thout you're too oncommon powerful feeders. As for takin' ye over to Berkley's, s'pose I can do it, seein' yer in a fix. But the main thing with me about now is to know what in the world you'ns is a doin' away out here, a playin' round with these here bows and arrers!"

There was a smack of genuine curiosity in his voice and manner which I could not refrain from respecting. So, while we lounged in the shade, I took pains to relate to him many of my pleasantest adventures, "by field and flood," with the long-bow. He listened with the quick, sincere interest of a child, and by the time the tide had turned I had evidently won both his respect and admiration. When we had eaten his food, which proved very palatable, and, having struck a bargain with him, were on the point of embarking in his skiff, he suddenly proposed that, as it was a long pull to Berkley's, we should go to his cabin on a neighboring island for the night, and proceed to Berkley's in the morning. As if by way of sauce to this suggestion, he said that we could take the estuary before mentioned in our way, and have an hour or two of good sport shooting wild-fowl. Nothing could have better pleased us. The proposition

was quickly accepted, and five minutes later we were in his staunch boat, sweeping at no mean speed down upon the wooded crescent that flanked the feeding-place of the wild-fowl.

The old man, as he pulled us along, with slow, steady strokes, told us he was living just the sort of life that pleased him. He was as happy as he desired to be. He had a little "place" over on the island yonder, a few orange trees, a garden spot, some bananas, some fig trees, and a few other comforts suited to his mode of life. For the rest he fished, and took the world easy. He didn't see any use of people rushing and racing after wealth, when contentment and ease were so much more preferable. How long had he been living here? Thirty years! Was at the point of death with consumption when he came—from Tennessee, I believe—and now see how hale and strong he was for one of his years!

We drew on, and, passing around the sickle-like point of the crescent and through a narrow way between high walls of rushes, swept into a singular pond-like place, where tufts of tall grass dotted the surface of the water, which was literally alive with fowl. I shared my thirty-four arrows with Will, and when everything was ready, the sport began. The old man refused to fire a shot. It was good enough for him to watch our display of archery,

and this was uncommonly sharp at times. In fact, we never did better work than on that evening. Some half-accidental wing-shots, resulting from letting drive through a bunch of ducks as they rose from the water, particularly pleased our boatman, and when I clipped a redhead through a quartering shot over fifty yards of water, he clapped his hands, and most emphatically and profanely praised both my skill and my lemon-wood weapon, which latter was the first of the kind I had ever tried, and proved to be a marvel of elasticity and power.

Part of the time I took my stand on a low tussock, keeping well hidden in the high grass, whence I had some beautiful shots at short distances, scoring a number of charming hits, but losing arrows so rapidly that presently, to my surprise, I had but seven left. After this, I took none but fair chances, and shot with great care. My companions in the canoe kept drifting slowly around here and there, continually driving the birds to me, and if I had had a fresh sheaf of arrows, I could have killed scores. I was astonished to find them so tame. Quite often, when I knocked one over, its companions would, instead of flying away, swim curiously round about the fluttering victim. This is one of the beauties of hunting with our weapon. The short, dull sound of the bow's recoil can be heard but a little dis-

tance, and the sharp whisper of a well-sent arrow is not of a character to frighten game. When we left that estuary, it was yet literally moving with fowl, though we had killed a great number. If so many shots from a fowling-piece had been fired there, not a wing would have remained!—the mere noise itself would have driven them away.

We had lost all our arrows when, at about an hour before sunset, we slipped out through the narrow channel and pulled away for the low-lying island close into the mainland, upon which our boatman lived. A steady pull of perhaps three-quarters of an hour, over a blue, peaceful sheet of sea, brought us into the mouth of a slender creek, cutting with a graceful curve into the heart of the island. This was our way. We looked beyond a point of marsh to our left, and saw the sun like a mighty ball of red-hot metal just touching the far limit of the glorified sea, and then we passed into the cool shade of trees, that made a charming twilight, and soon we ran alongside of a pretty sail-boat lying at anchor in the creek, putting to shore where a flight of wooden steps led up a little bluff.

The old man bustled out and helped us ashore with our game, after which he led the way up the steps to where a broad path curved into an inclosure whose fence was a hedge of magnificent old orange trees.

"Here's my possessions," he said, and, bidding us follow him, he walked rapidly along the path, drawing us into an orchard of some six hundred orange trees in full fruit, passing through which we came into a garden of bananas, hedged with dusky fig and lemon trees; beyond this still, and fronting a stretch of open sea, stood a low, rambling house of five or six rooms, built of round logs. Neatness and comfort everywhere. We were met at the door by a pleasant-looking old lady, our boatman's wife. A married son with his wife and three children dwelt here, too—a family of hermits, from whom we had more than royal welcome. The old man grew more interesting as we became more familiar with his peculiarities, and both he and his household seemed delighted to have us for guests. I took great pleasure in answering the multitude of questions asked by old and young, sitting up till far into the night describing places I had seen and adventures that had befallen me in my rambles. I can think of nothing more romantic than the situation and circumstances of this isolated home on a wild island of the semi-tropics. Evidently it was a place of perfect peace and contentment, where sickness was unknown, and where the good and bad effects of what are called refinement and culture had scarcely been heard of. Year after year they had lived there among their

orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees, their bananas and figs, with no wants beyond the ready power of unaided Nature to supply—happy, healthy, and with nothing like real labor to do. I think they would have willingly sat up all night listening, with all the sincerity of children, to such scraps of incident and adventure as I could call to mind and relate for their amusement. Such utter simplicity would be hard to imagine if one had not witnessed it.

That night we slept on dry, sweet beds of dried moss. As for me, my dreams were of an island-home embowered in tropical fruit-trees, where I dwelt in the bosom of my family. Next morning we were taken out in the sail-boat, and had a charming voyage of two hours to Berkley's.

When we reached Berkley's, nothing would do our old friend and his son but to have Will and me take a fresh supply of arrows and go back with them for a week's sport. So urgent and so evidently hearty was this request, that we complied, and that very evening found us again at the quiet old home on the island. We tried to make up for such hospitality by loading the boat with a host of things we thought might be acceptable to the family, taken from the store we had established at Berkley's, among which were a set of delf-ware, some knives and forks, and a small box of plug-

tobacco. I shall not give the name of this illiterate, but honest and charmingly hospitable family, and my reason is easily understood. They are living there in that lonely home this day, and if their simple trustfulness and generosity, and their exact place of residence were known to the host of tourists and rambling "dead-head" bores that every winter flock to the South, their peaceful retreat would soon become, to those ignorant but gentle hermits, unendurable.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to give a detailed account of the many delightful adventures that befell us during the eight days that we had our headquarters at "Hermit Home," as Will has ever since called the place. The old man and his son did little else but take us here and there from one hunting-ground to another, finding it a constant source of amusement to watch us shoot.

We ran up a small stream some miles into the mainland once, and spent two days deer-hunting. We saw but one deer, and this we did not kill. We got greater game, however; for the dogs "treed" a bear, which Will and I brought to earth with five arrows, one of which, with a "bodkin point," I drove entirely through his head, passing in between the ear and the eye, and coming out on the other side just below the eye. This was the largest animal we ever killed with the bow.

His weight was about three hundred pounds, I should guess, though we had no means of ascertaining it. We gave the skin to the old man. While on this hunt I got lost in a dense swamp, and thought for a while I should never again see home and friends. Such a vile place as that swamp was I hope to be forever clear of. It was the paradise of snakes. I must have seen a thousand moccasins. They were everywhere—on logs, on tussocks, swimming in the water, writhing together among the tangled roots of trees, drying themselves on the cypress knees, sliding and squirming about my feet, lapping their red, forked tongues and leering at me from every conceivable place—you would not give credence to the whole truth if I should tell it. For four terrible hours I waded round and round in that venomous place, shouting myself hoarse, and blowing my whistle till my lips were sore. Finally I found a little ditch-like stream, and following this it led me out. Near this stream, and in the midst of the swamp, I came to an old, half-rotten boat, which had once been painted blue, and on its gunwale was still legible the inscription, "U. S. A., 1832." No doubt this was a relic of some tragedy, but what were its circumstances and who its actors we can never know. The boat had been in its present position for many years, for considerable trees were growing in such

a way as to show that they had sprung up since, and one end of the vessel, sunken deep in the swamp-muck, was literally crushed in the grasp of huge roots that had twined themselves around it.

I was overjoyed when I again found my friends. I felt as though I had been delivered from something worse than a den of lions, and I imagined I had suffered all the horrors, without the dementia, of *delirium tremens*.

The following night we camped on the beach, having for our bed the soft, warm sand, and for our canopy a sky as blue and resplendent as that of Italy. About midnight, happening to become wakeful and restless, I put on my clothes (I had been sleeping wrapped in a light blanket), and, taking my bow and quiver, lighted my pipe, and strolled leisurely round a point of rush-marsh bordering a finger of shell-beach a half mile south of us. The moon, nearly at its full, was high, and shining with a power unknown in latitudes farther north. I could distinguish objects at a distance almost as readily as by daylight, and the peculiar sheen of the water and the dimly defined shadows of the rushes made beautiful lines of contrast athwart the mellow picture. The wind drew gently landward, sharp and fragrant, a real breath of the tropics. The tide made strong currents between the little islands off-shore, down which the porpoises ran,

rising at regular intervals to cut the surface with their dingy swords, puffing like some powerful submarine engines. I stopped at a certain point, and gazed for a long time, with a dreamful sort of interest, on the charming sweep of sea and islands clothed in the fantastic mantle of moon and starlight. Sometimes a myriad of silvery mullet would leap up and fall back into the water, like a shower of jewels, and anon a single skip-jack would shoot almost vertically into the air, his fins whizzing like the wings of a quail. The all-pervading murmur of the sea seemed more like silence than sound, and, though the combined light of the stars and moon was wonderfully strong, still a soft, mysterious wavering of the outlines of things gave them an unreal, ghostly semblance. The air, though coming from over leagues and leagues of water, was peculiarly dry and pleasant to the lungs. Consumption could not be generated in that region; it is a very garden of health. While I stood there leaning on my bow, and enjoying the influence of the night, I became aware of certain small, shadowy forms stealthily but nimbly running out from the rushes and down the beach to the surf-line.

One, two, three, ten, twenty, more than a hundred of them marshalled within a distance of three or four hundred yards, some no farther away than

a good bow-shot. My attention being now called to them, I could hear them quarrelling in sharp tones the while they made a munching sound as if cracking shells with their teeth. They looked something larger than cats, and ran, or rather ambled along, with their backs bowed up and their round tails held straight out behind. Now and then a half-dozen or more of them would rush together, apparently in great anger, fight furiously for a few seconds, then separate, each individual going his way none the worse from the contest. It was a weird masquerade, its effect heightened by the stillness of the night and the deceptive glamour of the moonshine, and while I watched it with that half-sleepy interest characteristic of one who has got up at midnight from a restless slumber, suddenly a great bird swept by me, passing not more than twenty feet from my head. It sped like a ray of darkness, making not the slightest noise with its wings, and struck one of the small animals like a bolt. A sharp cry of anger and pain, and then a general stampede of the masqueraders as they rushed into the marsh-grass in the direction of a densely timbered swamp, leaving the beach clear with the exception of the bird and its victim, now struggling in a silent, ominous way. Evidently it was a matter of life and death with the contending parties — a close, hard wrestle for the mastery. I

strung my bow as quickly as I could, then, running forward a few paces nearer, I drew and let drive with as good aim as I could. The arrow left the string with a clear, whirring sound, and I heard it strike with a dull thud as the huge bird tumbled over and began a loud flapping of its wings. I hurried to the spot, and found the largest owl I ever saw, pierced through by the arrow, and near by lay a raccoon dying from the wounds the bird had given it. I had frequently before seen owls and hawks strike smaller animals, but this was something rare. The raccoon was a very large one. Possibly my arrow may have helped to kill it, but I think it did not. I took my bird to camp, and, refreshed by my curious adventure, lay down and slept till sunrise.

The following day we returned to the Hermit's Island, and the next we went back to Berkley's, whence, the season being about over, we made our way to the hill country of North Georgia, to spend the summer in the pleasant valley of the Coosawattee, where the bass-fishing is the best that I know of in the world.

CHAPTER VII.

BOLD ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY CLAN.

If one would know what archery was in the days of its greatest glory, it is necessary for him to study the "Garland," a book of ballads touching the exploits of Robin Hood and his men.

The illustrated edition of these ballads, by Mr. Gutch, is probably the best. But my object here is not to write a biography of Robin, or to republish the "Garland." There is good archery practice, however, in some of the bold outlaw's exploits, and, since he is the recognized prince of modern bowmen, no one dare dispute the authority of his precepts and example in matters pertaining to forest shooting. Mr. Spencer Hall, in his "Forester's Offering," says: "Robin Hood was born at Loxley Chase, near Sheffield, in Yorkshire, where the romantic river Loxley descends from the hills to mingle its blue waters with the Rivilin and the Don—a place well known to every grinder in Sheffield, and often alluded to in the poems of the people's laureate, Ebenezer Elliot, who is the

owner of some land on the spot." He was an exiled patriot—an outlaw—a robber—a friend of the honest poor—a hater of tyranny, and, best of all, an incomparable archer. The date of his birth was about 1225, in the reign of Henry III., and he is said to have been the Earl of Huntingdon, outlawed on account of debt or some act of resistance to the crown. One writer on the subject says: "Robert Hood, no doubt, had drawn his formidable weapon (a six-foot yew bow) with good effect at Lewes and Evesham. He had drawn too strong a bow, in too good and old a cause, to be one of the first to lay it down, and submit himself to the tender mercies of Henry and his creatures."

The outlaw gathered about him threescore or more of his patriot companions in arms, after their utter defeat, and fled to the wild woods to lead the life of freebooters and troublers of the realm. The writer last quoted continues: "Trent was emphatically the outlaw's country: and never since the Conqueror had quenched the stubborn, still-resisting, oft-rebelling spirit of Northumbria in blood and flame, had that region been wholly without its outlaw population." Arriving there, Robin Hood at once took his natural place as the leader of the boldest and most feared band of them all. In a short harangue to his followers, as set forth in a very ancient ballad, he tells them:

"You need not be over-anxious, for we shall do well enough. See that ye do no harm to any husbandman that tilleth with the plough, nor to any good yeoman, nor to any knight or squire that is a good fellow; but Bishops and Archbishops, those rich ecclesiastics that live upon the fat of the land, and subsist by plundering the poor, you may beat and bind them. The High Sheriff of Nottingham, too, you may bear in mind, for he is no friend of any of us."

The mellowing influence of more than six hundred years has clothed in the charming garb of romance the rough deeds of that master bowman of Sherwood Forest, and no name is dearer to-day to the yeomanry of England than that of Robin Hood. But, according to the ballads, and in the light of our present civilization, it is rather hard to justify some of his most daring exploits. Instance the following: "We have an account of an adventure, which is said to have taken place when our hero was but fifteen years of age. He is described as a tall and proper young man, of good courage; and it is said that he was going to that town (Nottingham) to dine with the general, but who the general was we are not informed. On his way he fell in with a party of fifteen foresters, boon companions, it would seem, who were carousing with beer, ale, and wine. 'What news?' said he

to them, 'what news?' 'What news wouldst thou fain have?' said they. 'The chief news is that a shooting-match has been provided by the king.' 'And I am ready with my bow!' exclaimed Robin, in a tone of exultation.

"'We hold it in scorn,' said the foresters, 'that so young a boy as thou art, and that art not yet able to draw a string, should presume to bear a bow before our monarch.' Robin, who was conscious of his superior skill in archery, felt indignant at this taunt, and boldly exclaimed: 'By the leave of our dear Lady, I will wager you twenty marks that I will hit a mark at a distance of a hundred rods, and that I will at that distance cause a hart to die.' 'By the leave of our Lady,' said the foresters in reply, 'we will hold thee twenty marks that thou wilt not hit a mark at a distance of a hundred rods, and that thou wilt not cause a hart to die at that distance.'"

So the wager, according to the authority quoted, was agreed to, and Robin bent his bow, hitting the mark, probably a willow wand, at a hundred rods, and killing the hart at the same length.

The young hero then demanded payment of the money, which was promptly and insultingly refused by the fifteen foresters. "Take up thy bow and get thee hence, lest we baste thy sides soundly," cried they sneeringly. Robin laughed merrily, and

ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN. *See page* 95.

taking up his bow, walked away as if the matter were a good joke. But when he had reached good shooting distance from them, he drew and let fly shaft after shaft upon them with such terrible force and accuracy that he stretched all fifteen of the foresters dead on the ground, cleaving the head of the last one as he was fleeing away. These men were buried, all in a row, at the churchyard in Nottingham. The people of the town pursued Robin, but got for their pains a few pierced limbs and damaged heads. He escaped to the woods.

Maid Marian, a lovely and brave girl, figures as Robin's woodland companion, to whom all the wild forest rovers paid the tenderest respect and homage as their queen.

Robin's favorite mark was a small willow staff or wand (made white by peeling off the bark) stuck into the ground at one hundred yards' distance. This he is represented rarely ever to have missed.

The mode of life pursued by this outlaw and his band had everything charming in it, according to the ballads, especially from May to September, when they slept under the greenwood tree by night, and roamed the pleasant shades of the forests by day. Little heed they paid to the villainous game laws of the time.

Here are two noble sonnets, written by John

Hamilton Reynolds, full of the true spirit of the modern fraternity of archers:

I.

"The trees in Sherwood Forest are old and good;
The grass beneath them now is dimly green;
Are they deserted all? Is no young mien
With loose-slung bugle met within the wood;
No arrow found, foiled of its antlered food,
Struck in the oak's rude side? Is there naught seen
To mark the revelries which there have been
In the sweet days of merry Robin Hood?
Go there with summer and with evening—go,
In the soft shadows, like some wandering man,
And thou shalt far amid the forests know
The archer men in green, with belt and bow,
Feasting on pheasant, river-fowl and swan,
With Robin at their head, and Marian.

II.

"With coat of Lincoln-green and mantle too,
And horn of ivory mouth, and buckle bright,
And arrows winged with peacock feathers light,
And trusty bow, well gathered of the yew,
Stands Robin Hood, and near, with eyes of blue
Shining through dusky hair, like the stars of night,
And habited in pretty forest plight,
His greenwood beauty sits, young as the dew.
O gentle tressèd girl, Maid Marian!
Are thine eyes bent upon the gallant game
That strays in merry Sherwood? Thy sweet fame
Can never, never die! And thou, high man!
Would we might pledge thee with thy silver can
Of Rhenish in the woods of Nottingham!"

Good cheer is a part of archery. The feastings of Robin and his clan were on a liberal scale, and may be imitated by the bowmen of to-day with good effect. Bow-shooting is hard work, and I know of no exercise which can whet the appetite so thoroughly.

The merry bowman of Sherwood did not spare the pheasants, the rabbits, and the deer of the king's woods. His shafts sang through every glade and glen where the "game did most abound;" consequently his forest-table was always loaded with fragrant viands; and as for wine, the cellars of all the rich clergy—the Bishops, the Archbishops, the friars and hermit priests—furnished plenty of the oldest and best.

Barring the outlawry, murder, and robbery, this sylvan archery may be practised, in Robin's way, through the heated term, in our own day and land; and with the best results to one's physical and mental health.

Robin Hood lived to be very old. His death was a tragic one, though caused by the treachery of a nun, to whom he applied for relief in sickness. The woman opened a vein in his arm and purposely let him die from loss of blood. But at the last moment he aroused himself and called for his bow and a good arrow, and when they were placed in his hands, he said: "I will let fly a broad arrow; and

let my grave be digged where that arrow is taken up. Lay a green sod at my head and another at my feet; and lay by my side my bent bow, which was always sweet music to me. Make me a grave of gravel and green turf, as is right and becoming. Let me have length and breadth enough, and put under my head a green sod, that when I am gone they may say: 'Here lies bold Robin Hood.'"

They bore him to the window of the house in which he lay; and he drew his bow and shot. The arrow, a broad-headed deer-shaft, sped away and fell under a green tree. There they buried him. The following simple dirge, by Bernard Barton, will serve to close this chapter:

"His pulse was faint, his eye was dim,
And pale his brow of pride;
He heeded not the monkish hymn
They chanted by his side.

"He knew his parting hour was come,
And fancy wandered now
To freedom's free and happy home
Beneath the forest bough.

"A faithful follower standing by
Asked where he would be laid;
Then round the chieftain's languid eye
A lingering lustre played.

"'Now raise me on my dying-bed,
Bring here my trusty bow,
And ere I join the silent dead
My arm that spot shall show.'

"They raised him on his couch and set
The casement open wide;
Once more with vain and fond regret
Fair Nature's face he eyed.

"With kindling glance and throbbing heart,
One parting look he cast,
Sped on its way the feathered dart,
Sank back, and breathed his last.

"And where it fell they dug his grave
Beneath the greenwood tree—
Meet resting-place for one so brave,
So lawless, frank, and free!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MYSTERIOUS LAKE.

LAKE OKECHOBEE, formerly called Mayaco, or Macaco, ever since the discovery of Florida by Europeans, and if we may trust the traditions of the aborigines, long before, has slept in a sort of poetical fog of mystery. No doubt the far-famed story of the Fountain of Youth hidden away in the wild tangles of the Land of Flowers, being once disproved, let fall something of its delightful romance upon the lake, which, though hemmed in with almost impassable swamps, marshes, and everglades, and jealously guarded by all the cunning of its wild owners, really did and does exist—a wonder to the scientist and an exhaustless field for the operations of the naturalist and sportsman.

This vast body of water lies on the Floridian peninsula, far towards its southern point, having a shape not unlike that of a great spider, from whose elliptical outline of body radiate short, crooked legs. All around it stretch the cypress-swamps and wet prairies, through which innumera-

ble dark, sluggish streams crawl like indolent serpents. Its shores are in most places low, only a few inches above the water, and a great portion is unapproachable on account of the mass of lily-pads, stiff reeds, flags, and water-lettuce that forms a wide, impenetrable fringe thereto. Often this dense growth is spread across the mouths or friths of the streams, preventing their discovery, except with great labor and loss of time. The tribes of Indians formerly inhabiting Florida based all their poetry on fabulous hunting-grounds located on the islands and along the borders of Okechobee. They had a good foundation in fact for much of their dreamful story. In their light canoes, at certain seasons of the year, when the whole Okechobee region is mostly inundated, they could speed from island to island, from tussock to tussock, from hummock to hummock, finding everything their simple nature craved, namely, fish, birds, and wild animals upon which to practise with their bows and arrows and rude tackle, securing plenty to eat, and skins and feathers to clothe and decorate themselves withal. Vegetation was variegated and luxuriant beyond compare; gorgeous flowers and gay foliage made the woods and brakes dazzlingly bright and beautiful. Here in the midst of gayly painted birds, vast reptiles, and glossy serpents, under a sky of perpetual and healthful summer, the

swarthy hunter lived a life sweeter than Arcadian to him. The shores of the great lake, dimly defined and shaded with mystery, affected his imagination and aroused in him all the dreamful superstitions of his nature. And then, too, somewhere here were situate his pearl fisheries, whence his people drew their vast supplies of this ornament, loads of which passed into the possession of De Soto and his followers. No wonder the lake was jealously guarded by the Indian, and still less the wonder that his descriptions of it were touched with the coloring of romance, and bathed in an atmosphere of fascinating mystery.

White men, of course, were not slow to add such touches to the story as would render it most palatable to our own lovers of the new and wonderful, and very soon the region of the Okechobee was described as full of old ruins crumbling under the attacks of time, overrun with wild vines, and surrounded with moats and terraces, the works of some forgotten race. The islands in the lake, according to this enlarged account, were wild gardens of tropical fruit and parterres of fabulously beautiful flowers, among which all sorts of gaudy birds and butterflies floated and feasted the year round. Springs of health-giving water welled up through the snow-white sands, and perpetual breezes blew cool from the rippling lake. Here one could live to

ripe old age, free from the yoke of labor, and subject to none of the aches and pains, the changes of temperature and the poisonous malarias of other countries. But who could find the lake? The Indians utterly refused to be persuaded or bribed to lead the way, or to furnish the least clew to the wild labyrinth that bounded it. No white man dared to brave by himself the dangers that beset the undertaking.

So it rested for many years.

The early Spanish authorities in Florida may have sent expeditions into the southern part of the peninsula, but no well-based account is left us of any exploration of Okechobee itself up to the date of the Seminole war, when our government troops cut their way to its shores. It is probable, however, that De Soto penetrated to the lake without knowing it, and, standing by its reedy, boggy margin, gazed off through the cypress forests under the low hanging vines and air-plants that decked the trees, and wondered how far away the mysterious region still lay. But it is certain that to the geographers of the early part of the present century Okechobee was little better than a *probable* body of fresh water lying somewhere above, or rather below, the headwaters of the great St. John's River. During the stay of the United States troops in the Seminole country, the lake was crossed and recrossed by officers and

men, but it so happened that no one connected with the army cared to publish any very satisfactory account of such surveys as the military operations demanded, nor of the discoveries consequent thereto. It is safe to say that no military expedition, covering a field so new and interesting, has been projected within the century with less results to science and general information than attended the Florida war. The fauna and flora of the everglades were almost wholly neglected in those particulars interesting to naturalists, and descriptive geography was scarcely thought of. No notes, no sketches, no collections worth naming were preserved. "A fort was established here," "a camping-spot was there," "a trail was marked out, or a military road opened from this point to that," are phrases that contain the great part of all one can glean from the published accounts of the operations.

When the Seminoles were conquered and most of them banished, and our army had retired from the peninsula, the everglades fell again into darkness and mystery, and after a few years Okechobee began again to be doubted by some and clothed in romantic drapery by others.

In the winter of 1867 and 1868 I visited the upper St. John's region, and whilst there happened to get possession of some information and make some personal acquaintances which resulted in a

visit to and a thorough exploration of Okechobee and some of its creeks and rivers.

I was told that two or three parties of native "cracker" hunters had reached the lake at different times by way of the Kissinee River, which runs into it, or rather unites with it, after many a sluggish turn in and out among the prairies and wild jungles of that semi-tropical wilderness.

Of course many stories more or less improbable, where not positively impossible, were told to me, and all the old traditions and fables of the Okechobee revived. One hunter had visited an old ruined dwelling built of carved stones which stood on a high bluff at the southern end of the lake; another had brought home strange fruits of most delicious flavor; another had caught huge fish and had seen enormous water-monsters; whilst still another had encountered tigers and leopards and panthers too numerous to note. What giant water-plants, what fragrant flowers, what perennial fruits were those of the mysterious Okechobee! Exciting descriptions gratuitously reached me from many sources.

By a simple means, which it would be improper for me to here disclose, I came into possession of knowledge which led to my forming the acquaintance of three men—genuine hunters, by the way—who, during the late Southern war, along with several others, to avoid being forced into the mili-

tary service of the Confederacy, had "taken to the woods" and had lived the life of the Seminole for nearly four years. These men had transported materials and built on the Kissinee a sail-boat of considerable size, in which, through the years of the war, they had explored every nook, corner, and inlet of the Okechobee, living by means of fishing, hunting, and frequent raids on the stores and herds of the "settlements." In fact, these men had been freebooters to a certain degree, and outlaws to all intents and purposes, of the Confederate States of America.

But when I dropped in on these fellows they were good citizens of Florida and making a precarious living by lawful pursuits. I learned that their boat, "The Deserter," as they had named it, still lay hidden down on the marshy banks of the Kissinee, just below the old government military road-crossing.

I called the three together in secret conference, and put before them a proposition involving the purchase of their labor and the use of the "Deserter" for so long a time as I might need the same in exploring the Kissinee and the Okechobee. My offer was slender enough as wages usually go, but the men were needy, and it was better than they were getting, so it was quickly accepted. This arranged, I immediately dispatched a letter to

my brother Will, who was at Calhoun, Georgia, to come to me forthwith, fully armed and equipped for a bout by flood and field, which simply meant that he was to bring two or three English long-bows, a dozen cases of hunting arrows, plenty of fishing accoutrements, arsenic, etc., for preserving skins, a sketch-book and pencils, and a few other absolute necessities. As for me, I had come prepared.

By the time Will could join me I had procured everything needful and had dispatched two of the men with a wagon-load to the boat, keeping the third man for a guide. Procuring saddle-horses and a "cracker" and his two boys to bring them and the wagon back, we made our way to the river, nearly two hundred miles distant, in four days, after floundering through slush ponds and coffee-colored streams till we felt, as Will expressed it, "like tallow-dips on a hot shelf;" and found the men and boat awaiting us, all right and ready for the voyage.

A large shed covered with brush had been extemporized, and in the gathering twilight a pine-knot and fagot fire flamed cheerily, by the light of which we changed our clothing. A turkey had been killed, too, and hung, done brown, slow-roasted by the fire. We ate such a meal as half-famished hunters rarely get, enjoyed a pipe, and sought repose.

It was broad daylight when I awoke. The "cracker" and his sons had already been paid off by Will, and gone homeward with the wagon and horses and oxen. From the slight elevation on which the shed stood I had a good view of the sombre little river on which the "Deserter" lay at anchor. I went down and examined the boat. It was a monster, being about twenty-six feet long and six feet across, but it was shallow, and drew only a few inches of water. In many respects it was clumsily built and awkwardly arranged. It was rigged in a fashion not to be described. Notwithstanding its rudeness of finish, we soon discovered that its builders had well calculated the requirements the boat was intended to meet. In fact, the "Deserter" was staunch and steady, with broad bottom and long centre-board, drawing only a few inches of water, and perfectly tight. It looked like a minature pirate craft.

A little string of bead-like lakes marks the source of the Kissinee, whence, through a vast hunting-ground unequalled in any other land, it flows away southward in search of the Okechobee, its borders growing lower and marshier, until, from the point at which we struck it to its mouth, its edges are uncertainly defined by lettuce and lily-pads tangled together in dense masses for most of the way.

The width of the river is variable, rarely less

than one hundred and twenty feet, and often spreading out to an uncertain limit among water-plants and aquatic shrubs, and forming dark, still lagoons where snakes and alligators abound.

Here and there, however, beautiful bluffs overhang the brownish current, often heavily wooded and gay with flowers, where birds as brilliant as sunlight flash back and forth, making the air quiver with their songs.

All the mystery of the traditions of the Okechobee took hold of me again as we weighed anchor, and with the men at the oars, quietly swept down the rather rapid tide of the Kissinee. A peculiar balm was on the air and a fragrance of spicy foliage, with now and then a resinous hint mingled with the odor of something like sweet-gum. We drew on at quite a good rate, and I lay in the stern of the boat taking pencil notes; but my thoughts flew ahead to the vast, mysterious lake toward which we were winding our way.

Will, however, seemed inclined to take any sport that might offer. Standing at the very prow with bow in hand, he soon let go a sharply singing arrow at a white ibis that took wing before us. In an instant old ruins and enchanted islands slipped from my mind and I was upright stringing my bow.

All day long we wound in and out with the flow

of the stream, our men occasionally making the welkin ring with their songs.

At night we went ashore and spread our tent-wing on a pretty sloping bit of ground, and the next morning I refused to go on till I had spent three hours shooting at gallinules, coots, and water-turkeys in a neighboring pond or lagoon. At ten A.M. we resumed our journey, finding the current tortuous in the extreme, and at one point getting a fine view of one of those grass prairies so common to the peninsula. I killed a deer with my rifle, just before night-fall, the only one we saw while on the river, and we were glad to add its venison to our supply of provisions.

The moon being near its full and affording a strong light, we did not accept the offer of several fine landing-places passed near nightfall, and the consequence was that it was near midnight before we found dry ground and wood. We camped on a live-oak point, and heard all night what our men said were wolves making a doleful noise far to the east of us.

With the first gray streak of dawn we were astir, and after a hasty breakfast we again took up the clew and wound away seeking the inner room of the labyrinth. The river began to narrow—the bluffs disappeared, and soon we were speeding between rank aquatic plants, under the arms of ma-

ples and ash. Then came clumps of palms and curious rubber parasites. Courlans and snake-birds were everywhere. The journey began to be strangely monotonous, and somehow the air began to feel as though we were in the vicinity of some great body of water. Herons flew high overhead, and occasionally a small flock of wood-duck whisked past us. On one of these latter Will used my shot-gun to good effect, but the birds, on being dressed, gave forth a decidedly fishy odor, and we threw them away.

I have been on the Suwanee, the Caloosahatchee, the Ocklawaha, the St. John's, and many of the smaller streams of Florida, but I have never seen anything to compare with the lower Kissinee for snake-birds, limpkins, bitterns, cormorants, and herons. The bushes and trees are full of clumsy nests, and the clamor and clang of voices is incessant. The birds wheel overhead, they flap their wings in the tree-tops, they wriggle and pipe and scream in the water among the cypress knees and lily-pads—they meet the eye everywhere, they almost deafen you. Snakes, too, are abundant. The spotted brown moccasin is the commonest kind, though I saw some slender green tree-serpents and an occasional adder, or viper, as they are called South.

At its mouth, the Kissinee is wide—a half-mile

or more, I guessed it to be—and is literally choked with weeds, grass, lily-pads, water-vines, lettuce, and what looks like pale brown moss, though it may be the dead roots of aquatic plants. Pushing through this for a mile or more, the body of Okechobee is reached—still, dark, and lonely.

We raised our mast when we had cleared the obstructions. To do this our men had to take off their clothes and stand waist-deep in the water. Our oddly fashioned sail was soon shaken out, and we had the satisfaction of seeing it fill beautifully.

"The first sail ever spread on the Okechobee!" I cried, leaning over the larboard rail to get my first clear vision of the vast stretch of bluish water lying south of us.

"The fust sail, but not the fust time by a long shot!" replied the man at the tiller, and this reminded me of the "Deserter's" past record. Many a time before had this little pirate sailed this inland sea!

And now we cleared the grass points and tussocks of the bay of the Kissinee, and sailed out upon the body of the lake.

A feeling of disappointment took complete possession of me as we glided smoothly along over the gently swelling surface, scarcely making a ripple. This was Okechobee, the pearl fishery of the aborigines, the famous, the guarded lake of mystery!

Where were the ruins—the carved stones—the turrets and moats? Where were the happy islands? This was a cheat and a delusion. But no, yonder is an island, and—how quickly the blood leaps to my temples!—yonder is a ruin. I was on the point of shouting for joy, when suddenly I became aware that it was great cypress knees I saw, instead of low ruined battlements of stone!

"Yonder's our signal rag," said one of the men to another, as he pointed to where something red hung from a tall cypress stump. "It's been thar two years or more." We all looked.

It proved to be a tag of red cloth nailed there for the purpose of indicating the entrance to the Kissinee bay. The freebooters had put it there in the days when they refused to fight for the lost cause! Nor was this the last signal we found. The wing of an ibis similarly nailed marked the mouth of a stream coming in from the west, and numerous old loppings and blazes were pointed out to us.

We camped two days on an island, several of whose ash trees bore marks of the ax made by our guides three years before. While here we experienced a terrible gale, which fairly lifted the lake bodily up. We were deluged, and it was only by almost superhuman efforts that we saved our boat and cargo. It did not blow long, but the effect

was awful beyond description. At one time the water fell in great dashes through the tops of the trees blown over almost level. The lake swashed back and forth like water in a basin when the vessel is violently shaken, and the noise was terrific. But the dash and clash and turmoil ceased almost as suddenly as it had begun, and the voice of a cardinal grossbeak announced the end.

The remote solitude and scenery of the lake seemed to make my men communicative. They told us many a fascinating story of their outlaw life—thrilling adventures with bears and panthers —stolen visits to the towns above, and little predatory raids—the hundred and one dodges and strategies—the joys and hardships of their refugee life in the everglades and on the bosom of Okechobee. They were lank, sallow, long-legged, tough-looking fellows, and bore marks of having "roughed it" indeed.

The shores of Okechobee are for the most part marked by a line of trees flanked by marsh or floating islands of water-weeds. In some places the ugly cypress knees run far out, and pallid dead trees rise from the water like the bleached bones of giants.

Reed tussocks or islands abound in the lake, some of them mere tufts, and vast stretches of tall grass in some places seem to be bounded by the

horizon. For a great distance the west shore is a flat marsh, dreary in the extreme, while on the other side the lake is margined with forests running close down by and often into the water, which is choked with aquatic plants.

When the wind served our turn we had a most delightful time bowling slowly along over the bluish waves. Our boat was staunch and steady, but not fast, a good thing for our comfort, as in many places the lake was so shallow that we could not let down the centre-board, and we often struck on submerged logs, knees, and stumps. Vast floating islands of fallen cypress trees appeared here and there, rafts that swung to and fro and up and down with the impulse of wind and wave.

We had royal weather, the one gale excepted, during the whole of our voyage, and insects really bothered us very little, considering our exposed condition and the myriads of mosquitoes and biting gnats that breed in the swamps and marshes.

Once well out upon the open body of the lake, we found the water bright, even sparkling, but when taken up in a cup it appeared clouded with vegetable fibres and other filth. We tried fishing in many places, but found that no game fish seemed to inhabit the open water. The little creek mouths and estuaries, where the lettuce and lily-pads are not too thick, are, however, surpris-

ingly full of large black bass and beautiful bream, the voracity of which I have nowhere else seen equalled. One evening, just below the mouth of a large stream, probably Fish-eating Creek, I drew out bream of a pound in weight as fast as I could cast.

We followed the western coast-line from the Kissinee to the first large bay, then, as the wind set east, sailed across the lake in a direction a little north of east, getting a good view of the shore-line north of us, and easily found the frith of a large creek, near which we camped for two days; then we dropped down three or four miles to where, by a crescent sweep, the timber—mostly maple, ash, and box-wood—runs far out into the lake, forming a good harbor, and we found a delightful camping-spot on a sort of shell mound at the mouth of a natural avenue, through which the wind flowed gently all night long, keeping away the swarms of mosquitoes. We discovered good water, too, and enjoyed it as much as if it had been the choicest brand of ancient wine. Huge alligators were disporting in the aquatic weeds and grass of a lagoon hard by, but we did not care to molest them. Two or three hundred yards out across a stretch of yellow lily-pads, hundreds of herons' nests loaded the scraggy cypress trees, and, as night drew on, the great white birds flitted round and round and in and out like ghosts in the dusky twi-

light. It was Will who suggested that as soon as the herons had settled in their "rookery" we might steal up to them with the boat, and use our bows and arrows in the moonlight with great effect. The plan seemed good, and we tried to execute it, but an intervening wing of impassable marsh frustrated us. The next morning, however, with gun and bow, we secured the plumes of over twenty herons.

This profitable sport held us till near ten o'clock A.M., after which, resorting to the oars, for want of a breath of air, we rounded the crescent and consumed four hours in reaching a long, low sand-bar, lying northeast by southwest, perfectly white and bare. We supposed this bar to be the work of the recent gale, as it looked clean and new, and our men declared they had never before seen it. It was a good place on which to rest, so we disembarked. I swept the whole field with my glass. Far south to the greenish blue horizon line, I could see nothing but a waste of water, over which came a slow, uneasy swell, accompanied by a swashing sound peculiarly dreamful and mysterious. Westward, and a little south, at a distance of perhaps fifteen miles, clumps of trees in fanciful shapes marked the line of a large island, far away beyond which, scarcely discernible with my glass, appeared a palmetto ridge with its fans and spikes

gleaming in the sunlight. North of us what seemed to be a vast floating raft of grass and weeds crossed the line of vision.

After an hour for dinner and sketching, we took advantage of a stiff breeze blowing to the south-west and bowled along over about twenty-five miles of pretty high waves, to a large bay, on the north side of which we camped near some veritable ruins. But I am compelled to add that they were the ruins of a rude shanty reared by my men and their companions in the days of their outlawry. The poles and palmetto thatch of which this hut was made, they had transported in the boat from far up the lake. The frail thing was blown awry, and was fast sinking in the sand. My men examined it with a good deal of interest, apparently; conversing meanwhile among themselves in tones too low for me to distinguish the words.

We remained here for three days, waiting for a favorable wind, then set sail, and swept by a long curve, close to the grass marshes of the southern end of the lake, beyond which the everglades stretch away to the chain of little lakes whence a number of streams creep down to the coast. We slept in the boat one or two nights while examining this stretch of shore, and here was the only place where the mosquitoes were unmanageable.

Leaving the dreary region of marsh-grass and

custard apple, we rowed hard in a northeasterly direction, making for the dark line of cypress trees that fringe the eastern shore of Okechobee. We encountered several rafts of floating grass and weeds and passed numerous low marsh islets lying southeast of our course. The body of the lake now lay west of us. We found good foothold on a little beach betwixt the water and a gloomy cypress swamp. We camped here, and were serenaded all night by raccoons squeaking and chattering in the trees hard by. This animal seemed abundant all along the east shore of the lake, and no doubt makes great havoc with the eggs of the wood-ducks that nest in the hollows of the big cypress trees. I killed a large old marsh-hare with my bow by moonlight the night we camped here, the only one seen during our voyage.

Our next stopping-place was twenty miles by the shore-line farther north, where we stayed two nights and a day. Here we were visited by two cadaverous-looking Indian men and a boy. They were from a hunting party of Okechobees, who, they said, were camped ten miles east on the prairie. They reported deer very scarce, and turkey more so. Their guns were rude flint-lock rifles. They examined our long-bows and arrows with much apparent interest, the boy seeming especially delighted.

With a favoring wind we next sailed in a northwesterly direction to a large island some twenty miles distant, where we shot many herons of both the white and blue kind. This island had a wildly tropical luxuriance of vegetation, and would be a pleasant place for a fortnight's sojourn in January, if one were seeking solitude and—mosquitoes! I ought not to complain of these merry insects, however, for they never annoy me as they do other persons, no matter how numerous and bloodthirsty their swarms may be. With a little oil of pennyroyal properly prepared and rubbed on my face and hands, I defy them.

From this island, sailing some twenty degrees north of east, we skirted the shore where immense cypress trees shade a low sand-beach, and landed on the inner angle of a pointed bay, which seems to be about twenty miles in a southeasterly direction from the frith of the Kissinee. Here we remained three days, and, guided by one of my men, Will and I penetrated inland to the Okechobee prairie and beyond it to a vast stretch of pine lands, where we killed several turkeys and a deer. Parts of the prairie just mentioned are covered to the depth of six inches with water, which is completely hidden by the saw-grass that grows in it.

Our next sail was a tiresome tacking process, by which we zigzagged up the indented coast-line on

the northeastern side of the lake, passing what seemed to be the mouths of two considerable creeks, across which the floating lettuce and lily-pads had flung an impassable barrier.

We camped about eighteen miles from the Kissinee and were again visited by Indians. It was not far from this spot that, several years later, while re-exploring Okechobee alone in a small skiff, I met a party of several gentlemen, who in a large boat were "doing" the lake on "scientific" principles. They seemed to be a jolly, energetic set, bent on finding out all they could. They had come down the Kissinee, and had been on the lake for some weeks. They thought me unarmed, overlooking my two long-bows and bundle of arrows, which lay in the bottom of my rude skiff. In answer to some friendly questions I told them I was a Hoosier looking at the country. Being Yankees, they "guessed" I might get drowned if I trusted myself to Okechobee in that little skiff. Little did they dream that in that same frail box I had already paddled and poled my way over many miles of the lake with a view to the discovery of the old pearl-fisheries of the Indians! They gave me a box of matches and went their way. I have since learned that this party had been sent out by the proprietors of an Eastern journal to explore the lake and make a collection from the flora and fauna of the region.

When we again sailed, our course was west of north. After two miles of slow motion with a quartering wind, we had to resort to the oars. We entered the mouths of several small creeks, apparently mere connecting-links between some large lagoons and the lake, and after a long day's work entered a large frith or bay and slept in our boat. Next morning, we made a careful examination, and found three creeks, we thought, emptying into this bay. There are several decaying huts on some points here to which the Indians from the lower lake regions come occasionally, to occupy them for a while during their hunting excursions. From the appearance of the old fruit-gardens surrounding these dilapidated shanties, I should judge that a small colony of "crackers" might be planted here and do well, as things go on the peninsula. While hunting there, Will killed, with his bow, a gayly-plumed paroquet. We saw several of these birds, and from certain signs we were led to believe they breed there. The one Will killed was swinging to a twig by its short curved bill, and he knocked it off with a round-headed arrow.

The fishing was fine at the innermost point of the bay, where the creeks above mentioned come in. With a spinning-spoon mounted with scarlet feathers and white tail-hair of a deer, I took black bass and large perch till I was tired. Some of

the bass scaled over six pounds each. When I hooked one he would spin round among the lily-pads, making a lively fight to foul my line, and I lost several fine ones before I learned how to land them. A bass broiled on coals is not a bad dish for a hungry voyager, especially when all the rest of his meat has spoiled, a "side" of bacon excepted. We ate the fish with great satisfaction.

Our next move was back into the mouth of the Kissinee, thence up the river and home, by way of the St. John's. The result of this voyage was by no means satisfactory to me. I was quite youthful and very visionary, and taking hope from some shells and a little further hint of pearls, concluded that the old Spanish stories might not be all untrue. So, some years later, I returned, and all alone, in a mere shell of a skiff, very narrow and shallow, and armed with nothing but a small Smith & Wesson pistol and an English long-bow and arrows, explored the lake in every direction. During this lonely voyage I made some Indian acquaintances. One fellow made a lasting impression on me. His name was Kakeegee, as nearly as I can spell it, and his friendship for me was something unexpected and touching. He volunteered many kindnesses, hung about me for several days together, and finally ran away with one of my

bows and a sheaf of arrows! Of course I cherish his memory!

Okechobee is a strange lake in many respects. Besides the Kissinee, many smaller streams flow into it, while its only outlet is south, through the mysterious everglades. The chief trouble encountered in settling its limits and the exit and even the entrance places of its waters, is the existence of immense floating or easily detachable masses of aquatic weeds and grass that with every great storm are drifted from one part of the lake to another. To-day the mouth of a stream may be open, and to-morrow it is choked with one of these great floats. A storm on Okechobee is simply a rearrangement of the lake, whose whole southern confine oscillates with every wind.

There are several islands, probably permanent, in the lake, other than those already described, but they are low marshes without timber. From north to south the water measures forty-seven miles. From east to west its greatest extent is nearly thirty.

The principal trees found on the lake are, in the order of their number, cypress, ash, maple, palmetto, oak, magnolia, and boxwood. Elderberry and willow bushes are abundant, and that strange, huge parasite, the rubber tree, is often found enclosing large trees in its folds, from root to top.

Gorgeous air-plants and luxuriant vines run among the branches of the forests, from tree to tree, blending their odd, gay foliage and fiery spikes with the fronds of the palm and the sprays of the cypress. In many places the scenery is fancifully picturesque, the water and aërial effects being especially fine. The air is generally fresh and cool, but quite fluctuating in strength and direction. The sunshine is sometimes almost burning hot, but, for many days together, I suffered no inconvenience from this source. A sort of fog usually hung over the lake from three o'clock to ten o'clock A.M., after which a haze, not unlike that of a Western Indian summer, took its place, clothing the distant marshes and tree clumps in a peculiarly dreamful dimness.

In the lagoons and creeks bordering the lake, alligators are large and numerous.

The principal birds of the lake are the limpkin, the snake-bird, the herons, cormorants, ibis, gallinules, coots, spoonbills, kingfishers, fish-crow, teal, and wood-duck.

Fish-hawks and barred owls were numerous, and we found many of their nests.

I killed two fine specimens of the ivory-billed woodpecker and saw many more.

The red-winged blackbird was seen in swarms in all the swamps and marshes, and great flocks of

them flew over the lake from side to side in the early part of our stay.

Swallows in abundance skimmed the water near the shores, and various song-birds enlivened the dusky depths of the woods.

Okechobee can never have the winter cottages of rich Northerners along its shores, and its islands will never be popular as picnic grounds. The deadly moccasin is everywhere. Myriads of insects infest the whole region, biting and stinging by night and day, and the water is bad.

I made many pencil sketches of the most striking features of the scenery, but neither pen nor pencil can give more than a rough idea of the solitude, the tropical mysteriousness, the wild, monotonous gloom of the vast waste.

If Okechobee has no venerable ruins, it at least has venerable trees. Some of its cypresses are of immense size and great age.

Our voyage, a part of which I have not given in detail, consumed five weeks and two days. It was altogether a unique and charming experience.

CHAPTER IX.

SHOOTING THE WOOD-DUCK AND HIS COMPANIONS.

DUCK-SHOOTING is, in its way, quite as delightful as duck-eating. But when I speak of duck-shooting, I by no means refer to those long beaches on the Chesapeake where the professional fowler crouches behind his screen and sends out his decoy; nor do I hint of those wild, sunny, rush-lined reaches of water on the Florida coast where the sport in his skiff, and the negro gunner in his pirogue, slaughter their thousands of birds every season. I would now bring forth some of my reminiscences of the interior of the Western and Southern States; reminiscences that have in them something of the freshness of those cool, sweet currents of air which follow the ways of the brooks and rivulets, and of those damp, delicious spots of shade under the swamp-elms where the wood-duck (*Aix sponsa*) builds her nest in the hollows. Recalling a hundred days of exquisite sport spent in chasing the teal, wood-duck, and widgeon, one hears the "quack,

quack" of the startled birds and the silken rustling or the keen whistling of their rapidly-moving wings, and mingling with these sounds—clear, distinct, characteristic of itself—the sharp hiss of a feathered arrow. Perhaps, after all, it is the bow and arrows that furnish the peculiar flavoring of this sport, and serve to render the narrow rivers, brooks, and ponds of the West and South so attractive to the enthusiastic archer. Another thing is worth noting just here. The bowman, to be successful as a hunter, must learn to perfection the habits of his game. This necessity gives him opportunities to see many things, and note many habits peculiar to certain kinds of small game, overlooked by other sportsmen and naturalists. The golden-eyed duck or whistler (*Clangula Americana*), though not often found far in the interior, is a favorite bird, and an incident involving the killing of one may well serve to describe a singular habit (common to several species of American ducks), which I have never seen mentioned by writers on ornithology, or in the books on field sports.

I had been, for an hour or two, following a dozen or more blue-winged teal (*Querquedula discors*) down a small stream, without so much as getting a shot. While creeping slyly along close to the brook's edge, under cover of a clump of papaw bushes, my eyes chanced to fall on a whis-

tler-duck, sitting quite still on the surface of a shallow miniature inlet just across the stream from me, a distance of perhaps a hundred feet. I happened to be carrying a heavy bow. I knew the teal were considerably farther down the stream, and, considering their wildness and the ill-luck I had had with them, I was glad to take a shot at this lone golden-eye. I let go an arrow with eighty pounds of force, without uncovering myself, and watch it through its almost instantaneous flight with satisfaction, for it started full for the mark; but just as it was on the point of piercing the beautiful statue-like bird, the misadjustment of one of its vanes caused the feather end to "flip" up, sending the point downward into the sand at the bottom of the shallow water directly under the game, leaving the arrow standing at an angle of about fifty degrees with the surface of the water. The duck took to wing promptly and swiftly, darting away through the wood that lined the banks of the little stream. I stood for a while silently anathematizing the action of my shaft, and was on the point of wading across the brook to secure it, when my golden-eye came down with a whir and alit with a splash near my arrow, beginning at once to rapidly describe small circles around it on the water, eyeing it curiously, and all the time uttering a fine piping cry, not unlike that of a gos-

ling. I was not expecting this act of accommodation on the part of my game in thus offering itself to me again, and so was not in just the frame of mind best suited to making a good shot. I sent a shaft straight across, an inch above his back, and into the water with a low "chug" that startled the bird again into a convulsion of flight. I now stood quite still, composing myself for a careful effort if he should return again. I had not long to wait. With a whirring sound, peculiar to the wings of this bird when flying, he came down like a bolt from a catapult, making the water foam where he struck, and again commenced his circular movements, and his close and evidently terror-inspired examination of my first arrow, his crest bristling, his neck-feathers ruffled, and his wings quivering. I let go another shaft, hitting him through the butts of his wings, and killing him on the spot. Since that I have seen a green-winged teal (*Nithon Carolinensis*) and a wood-duck go through the same sort of manœuvres, under similar circumstances. Every sportsman is well aware of the habit of ducks and geese returning to a pond or other place whence they have been driven, and flying in circles for a time, as if to make a survey of the spot before settling; but a duck in returning to an arrow invariably does it by a direct and very rapid flight. I have had opportunity to

observe this habit, or action, but three or four times, and have no explanation of it to offer.

The wood-duck (*Aix sponsa*) is also called summer-duck. It is the most beautiful of all our ducks. It is known all over the eastern part of the United States to as far west, perhaps, as the Rocky Mountains. I have killed it in Florida, Georgia, and Indiana, hunting it most successfully along the small brooks and lesser mill-streams of the interior. It is easily recognized by its heavy purplish green crest, the white crescent in front of each wing, and the bars over its eyes meeting under the chin. Its lower neck, sides, and tail are purple ; its back uniform with delicate pencillings of green and bronze ; its primaries silver white ; top of head black. It builds in hollow trees or in the largest cavities made by the flicker and great black woodpecker. Its young, as soon as hatched, clamber out and tumble to the ground unharmed. Water is generally near, and to it they follow their parents, darting about in a lively way, seeking and finding their own food from the first. Large numbers of these young are destroyed by water-snakes, turtles, musk-rats, minks, and raccoons. I once found a fine full-grown drake struggling to keep above water with a snapping-turtle of a pound in weight hanging to his foot. An arrow secured the bird, and a stone served to smash the turtle. So thick are these pests of tur-

tles in some of the Southern streams and lagoons, that you must hurry to take your game after knocking it over on the water, or the chances are it is dragged under the surface and lost.

From the first of September till the middle of November the wood-ducks may be found in considerable flocks on most of the brooks and rivers of the Middle and Western States, and when not more than two years old, are fine for the table. I know of no sport which can compare with shooting this bird with the long-bow. It seems to have been made especially for the toxophilite. It sits steadily on the water, is less shy and frisky than the teals and the mallard, and though a rapid flier, it does not take to wing so readily as most river ducks. But it is their short flight which especially recommends the wood-ducks to the archer. You may get a half dozen shots at one while you are vainly trying to creep within long range of a teal.

The most exciting time we ever had with these favorite birds was in a small inclosure, near a little mill-stream, where stood a few large wheat-shocks. The ducks had lit on these shocks, and were busily at work eating the grain and wrangling over the best spots.

We slipped up, under cover of a worm-fence, whose corners were grown full of tall elder bushes, and let drive, pinning a brace of them to the

straw. The flock was startled, and instantly took to wing, but, so completely were we hidden by the bushes, they soon came circling round and settled down on the shocks again. We killed seven, before they finally found us out and fled for good. We would have taken more, but Will, in his eagerness to shoot two arrows before they could take to flight, discovered himself.

When a flock of wood-duck, hatched early in June, are found on a small brooklet in September, if you can get them scattered into twos and threes or single birds, it is the very acme of sport to creep warily along the stream's bank and take shot after shot at them. They are not yet old enough to fly clear off and leave the stream, and so, when disturbed, they only spin away to a short distance and drop down again. All you have to do is to exercise some wood-craft in approaching them, and you can get all the shooting you desire.

Broad-headed, very sharp and deeply barbed arrows are necessary for shooting all kinds of wild-fowl, their feathers being exceedingly tough, and the birds themselves quite tenacious of life, sometimes flying clean off with a shaft.

Many of your shots must necessarily be at long range, wherefore, a ducking-bow should be as strong as you can manage to shoot with accuracy.

What a happy fortnight a party of two or three

archers can spend with their tent pitched on the bank of a well-stocked bass-brook, where the wood-duck are also numerous, can only be understood by trying it. You can carry your bow and rod at the same time, and if, while you are waiting for a bass to strike your spoon, a duck drops down near you, all you have to do is to secure your rod to the bank, string your bow and have a shot. Unlike the gun, the long-bow will not frighten your fish. It is almost noiseless in its shooting, and there is nothing startling in the little sound it does make. Take your long-bow with you on your next fishing tour, and I warrant you will never thereafter leave it behind. . . .

I once saw a tall, lean red fox in the woods with a wood-duck in his mouth. I started a dog after him, but—forgive the comparison—it was like starting a snail after lightning. The fox and the bird slipped from my sight like a shadow in a dream, one to its lair, to sleep on a good supper, the other to the hereafter of birds.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEATH OF THE WHITE HERON.

I PULLED my boat with even sweep,
Across light shoals and eddies deep,

Tracking the currents of the lake
From lettuce raft to weedy brake.

Across a pool, death-still and dim,
I saw a monster reptile swim,

And caught, far off and quickly gone,
The delicate outlines of a fawn.

Above the marshy islands flew
The green teal and the swift curlew.

The rail and dunlin drew the hem
Of lily-bonnets over them.

I saw the tufted wood-duck pass
Between the clumps of water-grass.

All round the gunwales and across
I draped my boat with Spanish moss,

And, lightly drawn from head to knee,
I hung gay air-plants over me;

Then, lurking like a savage thing
That meditates a treacherous spring,

I stood in motionless suspense
Among the rushes green and dense.

I kept my bow half-drawn, a shaft
Set straight across the velvet haft.

Alert and vigilant I stood,
Scanning the lake, the sky, the wood.

I heard a murmur soft and sad
From water-weed to lily-pad,

And from the frondous pines did ring
The hammer of the golden-wing.

On old drift-logs the bitterns stood
Dreaming above the silent flood.

The water-turkey eyed my boat,
The hideous snake-bird coiled its throat,

And birds whose plumage shone like flame—
Wild things grown suddenly, strangely tame,

Lit near me; but I heeded not,
They could not tempt me to a shot.

Grown tired at length, I bent the oars
By grassy brinks and shady shores,

Through labyrinths and mysteries
Mid dusky cypress stems and knees,

Until I reached a spot I knew
Over which each day the herons flew.

I heard a whisper sweet and keen
Flow through the fringe of rushes green

(The water saying some light thing,
The rushes gayly answering).

The wind drew faintly to the south,
Like breath blown from a sleeper's mouth,

And down its current sailing low
Came a lone heron, white as snow.

He cleft with grandly spreading wing
The hazy sunshine of the spring,

Through graceful curves he swept above
The gloomy, moss-hung cypress grove,

Then, gliding down a long incline,
He flashed his golden eyes on mine,

Half-turned he poised himself in air . . . . .
The prize was great, the mark was fair !

I raised my bow and steadily drew
The silken string until I knew

My trusty arrow's barbèd point
Lay on my left forefinger joint—

Until I felt the feather seek
My ear, swift-drawn across my cheek :

Then from my fingers leapt the string
With sharp recoil and deadly ring,

Closed by a sibilant sound so shrill
It made the very water thrill—

Like twenty serpents bound together
Hissed the flying arrow's feather!

A thud, a puff, a feathery ring,
A quick collapse, a quivering—

A whirl, a headlong downward dash,
A heavy fall, a sullen plash,

And like white foam, or giant flake
Of snow he lay upon the lake!

And of his death the rail was glad
Strutting upon a lily-pad.

The jaunty wood-duck smiled and bowed,
The belted kingfisher laughed aloud,

Making the solemn bittern stir
Like a half-wakened slumberer,

And rasping notes of joy I heard
From gallinule and crying-bird,

The while with trebled noise did ring
The hammer of the golden-wing!

CHAPTER XI.

THE GAME OF ARCHERY—LAWN SHOOTING, AND ROVING.

AFTER having read the foregoing chapters, and having given some time to mastering the rules set out in the Appendix to this book, the reader who desires to taste a few, at least, of the pleasures of archery, will (for lack of time, strength, inclination or what not, to go into the woods and become a modern Nimrod indeed) take at once to target-shooting, and the competitive game on the lawn. The ladies and gentlemen will join in this, and the boys and girls will take noisy possession of their new bows and arrows. The gay targets will be arranged on the smoothly-shaven lawn and every one of the happy toxophilites will be in a great hurry to shoot his first arrow. But it is soon discovered that archery is not learned from books, and that there is no royal road to its meed of success. Again the maxim is proven: "There is no excellence without great labor."

The game of archery is as old as history, but, like

everything else connected with long-bow shooting, it was brought to perfection in England during the period between the Conquest and the date of the adoption of fire-arms for the infantry of Great Britain. For, although the great aristocratic societies of toxophilites were kept alive, no sooner had guns supplanted the bow in the hands of the English yeomanry, than archery began to confine itself within the bounds set by the wealthy and exclusive. The great butt-fields made for public shooting were gradually abandoned and dismantled, and all the archery tournaments were confined to the beautifully ornamented parks belonging to the old societies, or to the lawns prepared at the country-seats of gentlemen and nobles who patronized the sport. Some of the prizes offered at the meetings of the several societies having royal and noble patronage are most magnificent, and the contests for them have developed a high degree of accuracy in shooting. The "Woodmen of the Forest of Arden," one of the oldest clubs, has three prizes exclusively for the lady members; the first, a turquoise gold knot; the second, a gold arrow; the third and highest, a gold bugle-horn. The "Hertfordshire Archers" offer the lady members a prize of great value and beauty. It is a gold heart adorned with a bow and shaft set in diamonds. The "Royal Toxophilite Society," under the patronage of the

PORTRAIT OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA. [FROM HANSARD'S "BOOK OF ARCHERY."] *See page* 143

Queen, owns a grand banqueting-hall in the old English style, situated in the midst of beautifully ornamented grounds. Mr. Hansard, describing this hall, says: "The interior is fitted up with elegant simplicity. In the centre of the apartment stands a range of oak dining-tables sufficient to accommodate the members on their occasional festivals. To the left, on entering, is a lofty antique chimney-piece of oak, with a dial in the centre. The windows, opening on a broad veranda which encircles the whole edifice, are of richly stained glass, proudly decorated with the heraldic bearings of its founder, his Majesty William IV., and the Earl of Aylesford. They bear in addition the following inscriptions:

First Window.

TOXOPHILITE SOCIETY.
A.D. 1781.

SIR ASHTON LEVER,
KNIGHT,
FOUNDER.

Second Window.

HIS MAJESTY WILLIAM IV.,
PATRON.

Third Window.

EARL OF AYLESFORD,
PRESIDENT.

"Massive carved shields of oak, emblazoned with devices emblematical of archery, adorn the ceilings

of this interesting apartment; and around its walls are placed a range of aschams, ornamented with crest and coronet, as well as the colors and pattern of each archer's arrow-mark. The badge and painting already described, with a portrait of the elder Mr. Waring, are also preserved at the banqueting-hall. This society possesses many valuable prizes, of which the Queen will annually present one. In 1795 Mr. Palmer, a member, bestowed an elegant silver-gilt arrow, on condition that it should be shot for during four successive years. At the expiration of that period, his crest and cipher were engraved on it, and the four archers who had already been successful again contested its final possession.

"The Toxophilite costume, in Sir Ashton Lever's time, was a single-breasted coat of grass green, with an arrow engraved on the buttons; buff kerseymere waistcoat and small-clothes; Hessian boots; hat turned up on the right side, with black feather; belt, bracer, and shooting-glove." [See Appendix for description of these accoutrements.]

The "Woodmen of the Forest of Arden" has long been one of the grandest societies of archers in the world. It was established by the Marquis of Aylesford, whose renown as a bowman was only equalled by his enthusiasm for the sport; his shooting was remarkable for the very flat trajectory of his arrows, denoting unusual strength of arm and

sleight in loosing. The uniform of the Woodmen is "a plain frock of Kendal green, with gold buttons bearing an arrow, on which is inscribed the word 'ARDEN,' white waistcoat, round hat, and black feather."

A very beautiful "exchange of honors" occurred between the Woodmen of Arden and the Royal Toxophilite Society. The Woodmen sent the Toxophilites the "freedom of their society and grounds" by a parchment richly illuminated and inclosed in a small coffer made of oak-wood. The Toxophilites responded by sending the same in a delicately carved box of yew.

In 1834 the Royal Toxophilites and the "West Berkshire United Archery Club" had a meeting and shot for two prizes, a claret vase and stand and a silver inkstand. The shooting was exceedingly fine. The first prize was won by Edwin Myrick, Esq., the second by Rev. E. Scott.

The "Royal Edinburgh Archers" existed as far back as the reign of James I., and still lay claim by royal charter to be the king's body-guard whenever he comes within five miles of the city. More than a thousand members belong to this great society, and their public exhibitions are on the grandest scale of splendor. When they march through Edinburgh on their way to their grounds to shoot for their annual grand prizes, they are led

by an officer bearing a bow of colossal size, from which is suspended the royal purse.

One of the prizes yearly competed for by the Edinburgh archers is a vast silver bowl, called the archer's bowl, large enough to "hold two bottles of rum converted into punch. It is, like most of the others, a nominal prize, being kept at the Archers' Hall, the winners having their names with the date of shooting engraved upon it.

The purse of twenty guineas, offered yearly by the Crown, is contested for with a zeal worthy the royal gift. It is deemed the highest mark of distinction to win this munificent prize. The beautiful custom of the club is that the winner of the purse shall, with the money, purchase a piece of plate to suit his taste, bearing archery decorations and mottoes engraved upon it, which he shall present to the society, to be kept in Archers' Hall.

Says Mr. Hansard: "A singular match was decided on the 6th of June, 1827, between a portion of the married and unmarried members, at one hundred and eighty yards; the benedicts of the company, who reckoned thirteen points more than their adversaries, carried away the prize, of course."

"In the summer of 1832 the body-guard received his Majesty's gift of a pair of splendid colors, through the Duke of Buccleugh."

In 1835 there was a shoot between members of the "Royal Toxophilites," the "East and West Berkshire Clubs," "The Windsor Foresters," and the "Welbourne and Clapton Archers." The distance was one hundred yards, each archer shooting two hundred and ten arrows, with the following scores winning:

Shots.	*Archer's Name.*	*Hits.*	*Count.*
210...	Mr. Marsh (of the Claptons).....	70	286
210..	Mr. Moore (of the West Berkshires).	75	285

This was accounted fine shooting; so it may be taken as a pattern, and whenever you have at one hundred yards shot two hundred and ten arrows, hitting a four-foot target seventy or seventy-five times and scoring two hundred and eighty-six or two hundred and eighty-five, or near that, you may consider yourself a good archer.

The English archery meetings are often on a scale of luxurious grandeur surpassed by no public displays of modern times. Showy tents are pitched on the greensward, in the shade of old trees—banners wave, martial bands play stirring airs, the gorgeous targets shine in the distance, the gayly dressed bowmen parade here and there or

draw the tough yew bow, and it is a festive time indeed.

It was the "Woodmen of the Forest of Arden," a most exclusive and aristocratic old society, who first admitted ladies into the circle of their grounds as competitors for their prizes, since which most of the clubs have been honored by the skilful shooting and charming influence of the fair sex. In the United States the "Wabash Merry Bowmen" and the "Staten Island Club" have led the way; the latter have their meetings on a beautiful ground at Staten Island, in New York; the former meet once a week on their own grounds at Crawfordsville, Indiana.

But the most delightful feature of archery, as a competitive game, is seen in the private social shoots held under the direction of some hospitable friend of the sport, when a few congenial spirits are called together for an afternoon to be spent in merry contest and converse, and closed with a simple and informal dinner.

Spring and summer are the seasons for archery, and the green and gold of the craft's trappings are for gay flower and vivid leaf, to make the archer in dress, as well as in spirit, a harmonious part of out-door nature.

In the summer of 1877, a party of the "Wabash Merry Bowmen" had a pleasant day in the woods

A PRIZE SHOT. *See page* 151

—ladies and gentlemen joining in an excursion to a beautiful picnicking ground on the banks of Walnut Creek, in Indiana.

There was a sweet spring of cold water in the midst of the place, and a low, thick sward of blue grass carpeted the earth, shaded by grand old walnut, maple, tulip, and plane trees. Birds sang everywhere; the stream, a merry rivulet, brawled close by; and the merest swell of wind brought to the merry company the perfume of wild flowers and the indescribably delicious aroma of a certain decaying wood called by Western country-folk sweet-knot. A goblet of spring water, washed down with a thimbleful of wine, made all ready for beginning the day's sport. The shooting went gayly on, some resting while others shot, till the time came for lunch, when one of the ladies was missing. She was soon accounted for, however, as a moment later she approached from the shadows of the woods up the little glen above the spring, bearing in one hand her bow, and in the other a gray rabbit, quite dead, with her arrow still sticking through its shoulders. But her feat of archery caused her more regret than pleasure, and she declared her intention of never again drawing shaft at living thing. In the time of Queen Elizabeth the killing of that hare would have been the boast for a year, of any fair dame who

had chanced to accomplish it. After lunch the sport was renewed, shooting at rovers up and down the brooklet's bank, and with now and then a pause to watch the shoals of minnows, or pairs of sun-perch disporting themselves in the liquid lights and shadows of the dimpling water, or snatching a long-range snap-shot at a green heron or wary king-fisher, was continued till near sundown. The voyage home was as pleasant as cheery company and the soft twilight could make it. Just as they re-entered the suburbs of their little Western city, the full moon, like a great golden target-disk in the sky, was shining on the glorified rim of the east, with star-points all around it, like the arrow-marks of an unsuccessful archer.

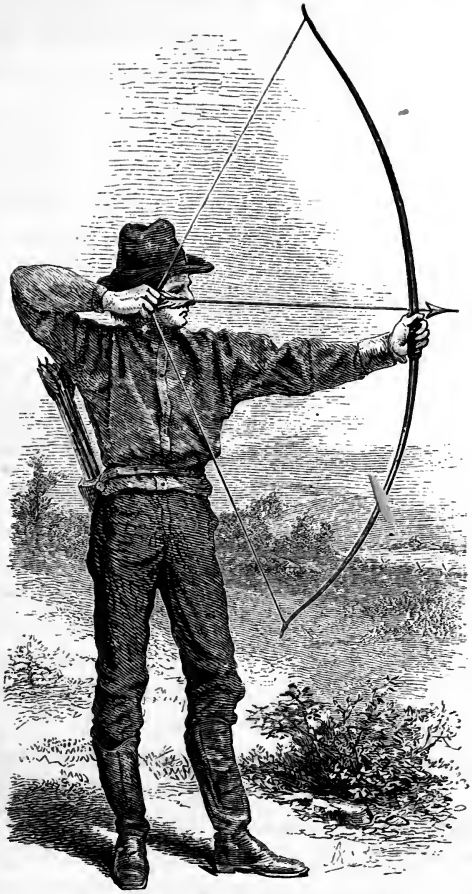
Butt-shooting is a favorite game of archery in England. As its name indicates, a wall of earth is used for a target, and the centre is marked by a white circular piece of pasteboard pinned on the face of the butt, or a regularly lined target is placed there. The distance is one hundred yards for gentlemen, and sixty yards for ladies. I would recommend the latter for gentlemen, and forty yards for ladies.

But how shall one become an expert and graceful lawn archer? The answer to this question involves a concise outline of the theory and practice of bow-shooting. I may condense all this into two

words: *intelligent practice.* Study your bow and the flight of your arrows; note the defects of your shooting, and consider how to mend them. If your habit is to shoot too low, see if you do not place your arrow-nock too high on the string, and *vice versâ.* If you shoot continually on one side of the centre of the target, note if your string be straight on your bow, and see if you do not twist the bow with your left hand just at the point of loosing the arrow with the right hand. Labor to acquire steadiness in drawing, and smoothness and quickness of loosing. To this end never over-bow yourself—that is, use a bow rather under than over your strength to easily handle it. It is a common mistake with beginners to place the target too far off. This leads to bad results. A good way to train correctly, is to place your target ten feet from you at first, and shoot at it at that distance until you can hit a four-inch ring every shot; then remove it ten feet further and repeat the practice till you keep inside the ring; move again ten feet and so on till you are shooting sixty or one hundred feet. You may then increase the distance daily, say three feet, till you can show good work at sixty or one hundred yards. When at sixty yards you begin occasionally to pierce the nine-inch central ring of the target, you may begin public shooting with confidence. But you must be patient and

careful; nor should you expect to become an accomplished archer without long and severe training. Like rowing, boxing, fencing, walking, and base-ball, or in fact any manly sport, archery demands abstemiousness and discipline. This was well understood by the rulers and law-givers of Great Britain, in the days of her highest military glory, when a few thousand stalwart archers were laying deep the foundations of her people's liberties by hard shooting on many a bloody field.

The requisite to good archery hardest to acquire is *utter concentration of thought and sight* upon the object to be shot at—this more particularly at the precise point of letting go the arrow. Mr. Hansard thus accurately and graphically describes the true method of shooting: "Again I remind you that drawing and loosing are to be performed together. Grasp your bow with the firmness of a smith's vice; draw steadily, until the steel pile of your arrow rests upon the knuckle of the bow-hand, while the thumb of the drawing hand grazes against the upper part of the right ear. That instant of time in which the sight suddenly concentrates itself upon the target's centre, whilst every other object grows dark and indistinct, is the critical moment of your aim. Loose then, without a second's pause, by gently relaxing the fingers of the right hand." How often I have experienced



DRAWING THE BOW. *See page* 154

this growing "dark and indistinct" of all surrounding objects, as for a second I stood at full draw in the act of letting go an arrow at game! You are sure to hit when this happens, for your aim is absolutely accurate. Those marvellously perfect archers of old had, no doubt, the power of commanding this condition at will. It is the meed for which all bowmen should strive and which may be won by judicious and regular daily practice.

It is very difficult to find rules applicable to every archer's condition; but an hour's earnest practice each day for a month will make one begin to feel like a bowman, and three months of such work will make him a fair shot at thirty or forty yards. The longer the distance at which you can successfully practice, the better, for, as Ascham says: "He that can do good far-shooting can do good near-shooting," and, in truth, this long-range shooting is, after all, the beautiful part of public or private archery exhibitions.

Mr. Hansard relates that the elder Mr. Waring was "seen to strike twenty successive arrows into a four-foot target at one hundred yards, in the space of one minute. He has likewise shot twelve arrows into a mark two feet square at forty-six yards. Mr. Crunden, now the father of the Toxophilites, aiming the same number of arrows at a

sheet of paper eight inches square, put in ten successive shots at thirty yards. And lastly, two other Toxophilites, Messrs Troward and Green, clapt each two arrows, at the same end, into a six-inch square paper at one hundred and twenty yards distance." To the above record I may add that Mr. Will H. Thompson, of the "Wabash Merry Bowmen," in the presence of some of the members of another club, in the spring of 1878, hit a nine-inch bull's-eye eleven shots out of thirteen, at forty yards.

But who shall teach you how to equal these examples? You must see to it yourself. Indeed, the whole process of archery is more easily learned than taught. The finer shades of its most difficult achievements—such, for instance, as that of nicely allowing for the effect of wind upon an arrow's flight—are caught by the inexplicable operations of experience, observation, and memory, and are often so cleverly executed by the expert that the result seems something almost unaccountable. To note this, go stand near the target, and let a good bowman place himself sixty yards away. Let the wind be pouring heavily across the range at about right angles with the arrow's flight. Watch him narrowly now as he makes ready to shoot. His bow-hand is raised so that the arrow makes quite an angle with a horizontal line drawn through the shaft-

hand, and its point sets in towards the wind, so that if, when let go, it should fly off at a true tangent, it would miss the whole target, far above and to the side next the wind. Surely, you think, that shaft can never touch the mark. But when the cord rings, and the hissing missile springs away from the bow, you see the line of its flight—a trajectory double-curved by the forces of wind and gravity—and with amazing accuracy it drops, with a dull thud, right into the gold! One must have a perfect judgment of distance, the strength of his bow, the weight of his arrow, the resistance of his arrow-feather to the wind, and the force and direction of the wind-current, all at once, to do this. But time and again you will see it performed by a good bowman, with as much ease as if he were shooting with a rifle. It is all in hard, judicious training and practice.

But, see yonder! a party of ladies and gentlemen on the lawn. Through the hall door you have a fair view of a lady drawing her bow. Get to your antique ascham, and fetch therefrom two goodly bows and some arrows, and let us go and take a few shots in turn. The weather is fine, and somehow I feel as if every shaft would find the gold.

Maybe, however, you would prefer a bout at rovers, which means shooting at any natural object

that one or the other of us may choose, as we stroll about, here and there, in the soft shade of the wooded pasture-lands. He who hits the mark has the right to select the next to be shot at. This is a most charming rural pastime.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLES OF THE BIRDS.

THE history of battles has always been full of fascination. From the simple sentences of the Old Testament and the rolling phrases of Homer, wherein are embodied the exploits of king, patriarch, and demi-god, down to the carefully worded and prosaic modern histories, those records are most interesting which treat of conflict and death; especially attractive are the accounts of single combats, in which individual meets individual, and the strongest, quickest, or cleverest wins the field. More than half the charm of chivalry lay in these contests. Knight met knight with a crash, and he went down who could not bear the shock. Who of us does not still love the tales of our youth—"The Scottish Chiefs," "Ivanhoe," and all those romances whose central figure is an athletic hero who always slays everything before him? And who of us, if he will make free confession, can deny that often and often he has longed to be a "free lance," in a country of romance—a Robin

Hood in a Sherwood Forest, or a mighty prince in disguise, riding away as a common knight to the Holy Land to fight for the sepulchre of Christ?

Whence comes this universal spirit of combativeness and love of mastery over our fellows—this secret or only half-hidden defiance of law and common right?

It is not peculiar to mankind. The fishes, the beasts, the birds, the reptiles, the insects, everything possessed of the ordinary animal powers, all love adventure on the field of fight. It has been for years a part of my recreation in the wild woods to study with minute care the habits of birds; and some notes of them here may interest, if they fail to benefit, the archer in a practical way.

One whose acquaintance with the beautiful and happy songsters of the May groves has not been of the most intimate and unreserved sort cannot readily be made to believe that the quiet and innocent-mannered nuthatch, the demure pewee, and the tender-eyed dove, to say nothing of the robins, the finches, the thrushes, and the starlings, sometimes give themselves over to the most vulgar brawls and cruel combats ever witnessed by human eyes. Yet it is true beyond hint of dispute.

That trim, gentle-looking, drab-colored bird, erroneously called turtle-dove by dwellers in the United States, and generally deemed so utterly

innocent and pure, that to kill it for the table or any other use is branded as heinous in the extreme, is not so innocent after all. Its moaning, sad-sounding voice is a mockery and a cheat. Its soft, dark eyes are a sham; its sober Quaker garb is calculated to deceive; its timid movements are not to be trusted. When once it has been insulted or injured by one of its kind, the dove becomes as cruel and outrageously heartless as any murderer can be. Some years ago I witnessed a fight between two female moaning-doves which for utter barbarousness could not be exceeded. I was angling in a brook for sun-perch, half prone on a grassy bank, lost in a brown study, with a cigar between my lips, when I happened to see a dove alight on a gnarled bough of a plane tree a few yards distant. Immediately it began to coo in that dolefully plaintive strain so well known to every lover of nature, and was soon joined by a male, who perched himself within a foot or two of her. I espied their nest, not yet finished, in the fork of an iron-wood tree near by. The birds made very expressive signs to each other with their heads by a series of bows, nods, and sideways motions, of which I understood enough to know that some intruder was near—perhaps they meant me. The fish were not biting any too well, but the shade was pleasant and the grass fragrant, the

sound of the water very soothing, and the flow of the wind steady and cooling, so I did not care to move just to humor the whim of two billing doves. It proved, however, after all, I was not the cause of alarm. Another female dove presently dropped like a hawk from a dark, dense mass of leaves above the pair, and struck the first on the back with beak and wings. A fight ensued, witnessed with calm interest by myself and the male dove.

At first the combatants struggled desperately together on the bough, fiercely beating each other with their wings, and plucking out the feathers from the breast and neck, all the time uttering low, querulous notes, different from anything I had ever before heard. Pretty soon they fell off the bough, and came whirling down upon the ground, where they continued the battle with constantly increasing fury, their eyes fairly flashing fire, and cutting and thrusting with their beaks like swordsmen. Blood began to show itself about their heads, and in places their necks were quite bare of feathers. When at last one of them became so exhausted that further struggle was impossible, the other proceeded to take its stand upon its helpless opponent, and would have quickly made an end of it had I not interfered. The vanquished bird was minus an eye, and was unable to fly for some minutes. The secret of the battle was jealousy. The male

sat by, and watched in a nonchalant way until it was all over, when he very lovingly strutted up to the victorious dove, and began cooing in a low, soothing tone. From that day to this I have repudiated the figure "innocent as a dove," and, whenever opportunity offered, have sped a two-ounce arrow full at the breast of the bird, widow or no widow. When properly cooked by par-boiling, stuffing, and baking, a dove is a choice bit for the table. While on this subject I may add that in the Southern States of our country doves often congregate in innumerable swarms, like pigeons, and do great damage to the pea-fields; yet even there the prejudice against killing them is so great that you rarely see a trap or spring set for them, or a gun levelled at them.

Many of our merriest singing-birds are very ill-tempered little vixens, spending full a quarter of their time in noisy quarrels and stubborn assaults and defences. The cat-bird, that sleek, slate-colored little mocker, which haunts our privet-hedges and red-haw bushes, is an inveterate brawler and bully. I saw one attack a blue-jay once and get killed in a twinkling for its pains. When first assaulted the jay evidently thought his assailant a hawk. He fled precipitately, squealing out his terror vociferously; but no sooner did he discover his mistake than he whirled furiously about and

broke the cat-bird's neck with one snap of his powerful bill. I have often seen a cat-bird dog at the heels, so to speak, of a brown thrush or great crested fly-catcher, and never rest satisfied till it received a sound drubbing, and had to fly ingloriously away to save his scalp from being pecked off.

By a fiction of the poets, birds all sing praise, if they sing at all, to the great Creator. Of course, this sounds well, and may have some moral foundation ; but I can come as near proving that a cat-bird curses, and swears, and flings out all sorts of abusive epithets at its enemies, when angry, as any one can to establishing the song-praise theory. How these little fellows can fret, and scold, and hiss, and imprecate—yes, imprecate ! Let a sparrow-hawk, or screech-owl, or butcher-bird go near one's nest, and, if you observe closely, your imagination must be very torpid indeed, if you cannot hear "Sacré-bleu," and all that, scattered around pretty freely. I have seen one fairly dance in ecstasy of anger when nothing but a poor little brown lizard came near it. A pair of cat-birds had their nest and young in a currant-hedge of the garden belonging to a farm-house where I was lodging one spring, and I used to amuse myself by exciting the anger of the mother-bird. To do this I had only to hang a bit of red cloth near the nest in her absence, and await the result. No sooner would she return than

such a twittering, and squeaking, and scolding would begin as only a cat-bird could generate ; and when she found out there was "no fight" in the rag, she would eye me sitting at my window, and mew triumphantly, as if she well knew who it was that troubled her equanimity. A war of words—or rather a war of notes—is a thing of frequent occurrence between a cat-bird and common brown thrush. Early in the morning through the month of May they may be heard screaming their respective medleys at the extreme pitch of their voices from neighboring trees, each songster maliciously bent on drowning the other's voice. The common barn-yard cock is given to a like ambition in the matter of "crowing down" all competitors. Speaking of the brown thrush reminds me that I ought to record right here a very singular combat witnessed by myself and brother, between one of these gay singers and a blue-jay (what bird is not compelled to fight the latter ?), and in which the jay was finally discomfited and beaten. We were lying in the shade of a wide-spreading wild-plum tree on the edge of a little glade. Near us was a clump of sugar-haw bushes, in one of which we had discovered a brown thrush's nest. The bird was incubating. A blue-jay, flitting about on mischief intent, as, in fact, a blue-jay always is, happened to spy her, and immediately attacked her,

driving her for refuge into the thick, thorny foliage above the nest. This seemed an easy turn for the jay, which at once prepared to have a feast of the eggs. But no sooner had it perched on the rim of the nest than the thrush, with a savage squall, plunged down from its hiding-place and struck it a heavy blow in the back. The jay retreated in disorder, but warily returned again when all seemed still. With infinite caution in every movement, it hopped from twig to twig, turning its crested head this way and that, till it reached the nest. Again, with a shrill scream, the thrush pounced from its hiding-place, using its long, sharp beak for a sword to stab the jay's exposed and defenceless back. Again and again the would-be robber fled and returned, each time to get rougher usage, and, finally, as if utterly outdone, with rapidly repeated cries of "De jay! de jay! de jay!" it flitted away into the depths of the woods, to come no more.

It would take quite a volume to tell the many atrocities I have seen committed by blue-jays. These birds are the cunningest, smartest, most wise, and the least scrupulous, of all feathered things. There is no depth of infamy and outrage to which the jay has not descended. I have seen one deliberately devour, one by one, a nest full of young sparrows, and then chase their mother for a

like purpose. Another was caught in the act of pecking, with savage brutality, at the eyes of a hare fast in a negro's steel trap ; while such tricks as wantonly destroying a finch's or pewee's nest are of daily occurrence with the bird in spring and summer. No wild thing, feathered or furred, less than an eagle or a fox, escapes this universal tormentor and executioner. The owls and hawks are, however, his special objects of hate, and the observant sportsman or naturalist rarely spends a day in the woods without seeing a hen-hawk, a great horned-owl, or an unfortunate screech-owl, surrounded and assailed by a noisy pack of blue-jays. For hours they will follow one of these victims, screaming at it, pouncing upon it at every safe opportunity, their numbers constantly increasing, until finally the hawk or owl, by a long, strong flight, or by diving into some hollow tree, evades and frustrates them. I once saw a great swarm of jays thus annoying and maltreating a little screech-owl, and I was delighted to the full when the big-eyed victim of their malignity suddenly pounced upon one of them, and, despite their screams and attacks, deliberately devoured it. It is not often that a screech-owl can master so large a prey, which leads me to believe that desperation gave it unwonted courage and strength. Not unfrequently a pack of blue-jays will spend the larger portion of a

day vainly squealing and chattering about the hollow of a tree or bough in which a flying-squirrel has taken up its abode ; and one of the commonest sights in western or southern woods in summer is a poor, jaded, and worried whip-poor-will, or bull-bat, beating blindly about from place to place, with a jeering swarm of merciless jays following it. But the yellow-billed cuckoo has a most summary way of dealing with jays, which works like a charm. No sooner does the latter appear in the vicinity of the yellow-bill's nest than, without warning or a moment's time for preparation, it is vigorously assailed and beaten off to a great distance, glad to escape alive. Blue-jays destroy large numbers of eggs and young birds every season, and not unfrequently the weaker finches, even when full-grown, are killed and eaten by them. Their victims are held between their feet, and plucked to pieces as a hawk or owl does it. In the Middle and Southern States, where the cardinal red-bird is abundant, fierce battles constantly occur between them and the jays.

I was fishing for bass on that beautiful rivulet, the Oothcaloga. The cry of a red-bird attracted my attention, and I looked just in time to see one of those little hawks, commonly called blue-tailed darters, pouncing upon the grossbeak. The poor little victim flew in a right line for a short distance,

then darted over and under a large limb of a sycamore tree. Now commenced a most singular exhibition. The grossbeak and its pursuer began flying round and round that limb in a vertical circle of about two feet in diameter. With each revolution their velocity increased. Here was a struggle for life—one of those flights to which the first white settlers of Kentucky became used before their pioneer days were over. I could not help getting excited. No race was ever more earnestly contested; the stake was life and death. The body of the branch around which they were making this singular flight was, perhaps, fifty feet above the level of the stream and directly over it. No foliage intervened, so I had a fair view of the whole struggle. At first the hawk was about half the circumference of the circle of flight behind the cardinal, and for several rounds this difference was evenly maintained. Presently, however, the pursuer began slowly to close on his victim as their dizzy rounds became swifter and swifter. The hawk whirled over and over laterally in his flight, thus accelerating his forward movement by a kind of screw propulsion. The flight of the grossbeak was an ecstasy of effort. It seemed to use every feather of its body. As space between the pursuer and pursued gradually closed, both birds began to utter short, sharp cries, full of intense excitement.

I put aside my fishing-rod and gazed on this strange scene with every nerve strung to the highest. You need not smile. There was something akin to the awful in this exhibition, no matter if the actors were mere tiny birds. A tiger chasing a man would not have been more exciting for the moment.

Suddenly the birds put on a great burst of speed. The movement of their wings became so rapid that a low humming sound like that of a spinning-wheel was distinctly audible. So swift, indeed, did their flight become, that the hawk looked like a wreath of grayish blue smoke and the grossbeak a belt of scarlet flame. Of course this did not last long. It could not. Such intense muscular exertion rarely extends over a lapse of many seconds. In less time than it takes to write the words of this sentence, the hawk struck his victim, and, so exhausted were they, both fell into the stream. This saved the red-bird. No sooner did they strike the water than I gave a yell, which so frightened the hawk that he abandoned his hard-earned game. The grossbeak rose heavily from the water and slowly, droopingly flew away. I never think of that wonderful circular flight for life, that red-and-blue wheel of fate, with its intensely excited living periphery, without a thrill that is indescribable.

The season of love-making is the season of song, and likewise the season of battles, among the birds. About the time the males begin to strut and look about them for wives, rumors of strife and hints of war begin to pervade the sweet air and sunshine of spring. The males fight for possession of the comely females, and in turn the females struggle and boldly battle for the queenship of the gayly-feathered males. Then the woods are stirred with song and shaken with combat. The rustle of wings is continuous, and the cries of triumph and shrieks of defeat are blended together into what the pious have named "anthems of praise." Here sits a yellow-throated warbler, rocking on a green spray of young leaves, gurgling a very rapture of music in his tiny mouth, and in answer to his sweetly erotic song a soberer-tinted mate comes to rock by his side. Like a flash of flame, another male strikes him, and the two roll over and over in the air, fighting desperately. The female joins the victor, and away they go on their love-journey through cool, green groves. Another female comes along, likes the look of Mr. Yellowthroat, and forthwith attacks. If victorious, she joins wings with her lord, and floats away down a current of bloom-scented air, to find a good place for a nest. So with all the wild, gay singers of the woods. Their days of glory are their days of

battle. Like earnest knights of fairy-land, tricked in shining armor and richly tinted plumes, these little adventurers of the groves charge down the dusky aisles and across the bright glades to cross lances with all comers of whatever prowess or renown. You hear a sharp cry and a little crash, as of suddenly crumpled velvet, when the tiny combatants collide in the lists, and after the fight is over, a brilliant feather, slowly falling through the soft air, is left as a souvenir of the momentous conflict. Two male orioles fighting in mid-air is a pretty sight. Think of animated "flakes of flames," as Dr. Holmes names them, whirling over and over, and round and round, now rushing together with a flash and a hiss, now flying apart to seek better advantage, and anon beginning a sparring process, with wing and beak, so rapid and involved that no human eye can follow the manœuvres! Sharp, quick, snapping sounds of crossing quills and closing mandibles tell of sincere work going on in that revolving mist of jet and gold.

Birds seem to hold the law of hereditary right in high esteem, contesting every adversary claim to the death. The golden-winged woodpecker, though by no means an aggressive warrior, fights yearly battles for his ancestral hall in some half-decayed tree defending his hereditament against the repeated and well-planned attacks of the white-

tailed woodpecker, and the common bluebird. Naturalists have quite pardonably fallen into a mistake in attempting to explain this golden-wing's object in nearly always excavating the receptacle for its nest close up under a projecting knot or limb. This is not done in order to have a watershed above the hole, but is a military precaution to prevent the white-tail and bluebird from stationing themselves directly above, while the golden-wing is in the cavity, and pecking his defenceless head as he comes out. I have often witnessed with great interest the efforts of bluebirds to dislodge a flicker in order to occupy its excavation for their own purposes. For days together a pair of bluebirds will worry and scold and peck at, and in every possible way annoy their victim, and if for a single moment it leaves the hole, in goes a bluebird, and its home is gone! Nor is the flicker or golden-wing the bluebird's only subject of outrage and ouster. The little, hairy woodpeckers, the chickadees, and even the swallows and martins, are driven from their homes without being allowed to remove so much as the soft lining thereof. Then, in turn, these beautiful little vandals fight with each other for possession of the conquered castles.

The wrens, and chickadees, and pewees have their battles, and even the humming-birds are ex-

tremely bellicose. By watching diligently in a flower-garden for a few hours in fine spring weather, any one may see two humming-birds take a tilt in a style worthy of admiration. Usually, one bird sits on a flower-stem, holding his long, sharp bill in a perpendicular attitude, while the other sweeps back and forth, like an animated pendulum, through the arc of a circle, subtended by a cord of about ten feet in length, the middle point of which rests on the extremity of the sitting bird's bill. With each vibration the attacking party utters a keen rasping chirp, and tries to strike its antagonist with its wings; but the bill is always presented like a lance, on which to receive all blows. These Lilliputian battles are of short duration, and rarely end in noticeable damage to either combatant. The animus, however, is present, the birds giving every evidence of supreme anger and malice. A few of the stronger of our small birds are famous for their prowess in battle, and the black-headed fly-catcher is commonly called king-bird, on account of its ability to put to flight even the great hen-hawk. By some this fly-catcher is called "bee-martin," as it sometimes sits near a hive and destroys great numbers of the little workers. I have seen a pair of these birds assaulting a large hawk in mid-air and forcing it to mount higher and higher, till at length it looked no larger than a swallow as-

sailed by a couple of hornets. When an intelligent farmer finds that a bee-martin's nest is near his house he has no fear that the hawks will feast on his barn-yard fowls, or the crows get away with many eggs; nor will the woodpeckers have peaceful possession of his apple and cherry trees.

Speaking of woodpeckers, the red-headed, white-tailed variety is the most unruly, ill-tempered, and hopelesely quarrelsome bird in the world. He quarrels and fights for mere love of the business. He fights for cause and without pretence of cause. He actually neglects taking sufficient food in his hurry to be all the time in a brawl, consequently half the specimens I have taken were poor to emaciation when killed. I do not exaggerate in the least. For example, I once watched a white-tail for three hours constantly, during which time it did not take a morsel of food. I killed it, and found its stomach (craw) quite empty and its intestines almost so. But all this time it had been excitedly busying itself with attacking every bird it could find, all the time chattering and screaming at the top of its voice. It was late in autumn, and the oak and beech trees were loaded with mast, and these woodpeckers were pretending to store the acorns and beech-nuts away in every crevice they could find. My particular bird seemed to have taken upon himself the task of bothering every other one all he could, while

all the rest seemed bent on the same errand. Such a noise as they made! Blackbirds would have been shamed into silence. A houseful of women hungry for a chat would have been silence impersonated beside them! One bird could not perch upon a limb or alight on the side of a tree trunk for a single moment without being furiously assailed by from one to five others. Their continuous cries of "Che-e-e-w, chew, che-e-w!" were next to equalled by the ceaseless flapping of their gay wings. One little incident I well remember: I was closely following the movements of my bird and noting his plan of attack and defence, when suddenly he hid himself, as if from fear of attack, under a projecting knot. At the same time another one flew to the knot and perched himself on the top of it, holding an acorn in his bill. How closely my bird drew himself up to hide! How perfectly still he sat! I could not understand the game. The other bird, all unconscious of the proximity of mine, proceeded to pound the acorn into a crevice in the knot, then flew away. Instantly my bird took the vacated place, and, with one twitch of his beak, tweaked out the acorn and flung it away, screaming like a delighted demon. His ill-gotten joy was of short duration, however, for the wronged woodpecker knew the import of that scream, and came back like a bolt, striking my bird from the knot, and chasing him vigorously away.

Evidently my bird was a coward, wreaking a mean revenge for some past indignity at the other's hands—or rather, beak—by thus watching his chance to rob his little treasure-houses.

It is something remarkable that our great destructive birds of prey, the eagles, hawks, and owls, are not at all quarrelsome or bellicose, excepting when in search of food or when attacked. True, they are all pirates and robbers, never hesitating to acquire food by any foul means; but they rarely unbend their dignity and reserve enough to engage in foolish brawls. An eagle will strike a fish-hawk, but it is only to make him give up his fish; and the great horned bird of night will occasionally make the screech-owl hand over its field-rat. In these cases there is no fight. The weaker is simply robbed by the stronger bird. But occasionally these mighty kings of the air undertake to do battle. At such times they perform no mincing work. They literally tear each other to shreds. One of the combatants must die, sometimes even both. A friend described to me a contest he had witnessed between a great horned-owl and a hen-hawk. It arose from a struggle over a hare which the owl had seized and which the hawk attempted to take possession of. The sun was down, but not yet dark. In the struggle the hare escaped, and the powerful birds, enraged at being cheated out of an

excellent supper, fell at each other with the fury of demons. The owl soon destroyed the hawk; but while the fight lasted it was, as my friend described it, desperately cruel and bloody. He said that the carcass of that unfortunate hawk looked, after death, much as if it "had been run through a dull sausage-grinding machine!" An old negro, whose reputation for "truth and veracity in the neighborhood in which he lived" was above the average, is my authority for the following: The aforesaid negro was somewhat of a chicken-fancier in his humble way, and among a small collection of poultry in his collection was a red game-cock possessed of great strength and dangerous spurs. The chicken-house was an old log-cabin, with no shutters to door or window. One bright moonlight night in the wee sma' hours our colored friend heard a hen squall. Suspecting that some of his brethren were making too free with his property, he leaped out of bed and rushed to the poultry-house. Just as he reached the door his game-cock rushed out bearing an owl upon his back. Taken somewhat aback by this strange display, the old negro stood gazing in mute surprise, till the cock, bearing his heavy burden, had run out from the shadows of the house into the bright moonlight, where he suddenly stopped and shook off his assailant, and then, quick as lightning, dealt it a

blow with his spurs in the head. According to my informant, "Dat rooster did eberlastin'ly knock dat owl to hell and back!"

The aquatic birds have generally been considered among the inoffensive creatures, and consequently very little is to be found in the books of natural history touching their ways of warfare. But the herons and cranes, the geese and ducks, the plovers and rails—in fact, all the water-birds, great and small—are good fighters, and much given to squabbling. It has often chanced, in my wanderings by the streams and lakes of the West and South, that combats, especially in the heron family, have taken place directly under my sight. The common green-heron, or fly-up-the-creek, is a notorious bully among the lesser fry of aquatic birds—the sandpipers, kildees, teetersnipes, and small plovers having a deadly fear of him; while the great blue-heron, though much inclined to a dignified, musing-alone way of deporting himself, is quite often guilty of assault and battery upon the person of any and every one of the whole list of swimmers and waders. In the heron nesting-places on the borders of the Southern lagoons and lakes, where every tree is heavy with great, uncouth stick-heaps having each a heron on it, occasionally everything goes wrong with the rookery—and then what muttering and fighting! what flapping of long wings and what

wriggling of serpent-like necks! what darting of sharp, cruel beaks! It is a free, promiscuous fight, and soon over, without much hurt being done to any of the contestants. The pretty wood-ducks and green and blue-winged teals, the tiny buffle-head ducks and the tidy scaup-ducks, all are given to insulting and wantonly injuring each other, whether of kin or not. The drakes, especially of the wood-ducks, do some desperate fighting, though from the nature of things they cannot inflict serious injury.

I could fill a volume with the wars of the feathered tribes; but I have already set the reader to thinking. I feel a little like an iconoclast in thus breaking up one of the prettiest of the fictions of poets and rhapsodists; but it is the business of the investigator to blow the mist off from things, even if it is rose-colored.

The conclusion I have reached is that bird-life, so far from being that happy, song-glorified, praiseful existence so extolled by poets, sacred and profane, is one scene of restless struggle and strife, hunger and dread, and fear, and pain. Beset on all sides by deadly foes, continually pressed by hunger, all the time under the influence of some controlling passion, roaming continually by day, and hovering in dark dread by night, how can they be happy? Look closely at the eyes of

the canary or mocking-bird while it is singing in the cage. Is the expression there a happy one? You see a sad, worried, longing gleam that has no joy at its root. Just so with the wild ones. Their eyes betray the soulless shallowness of their so-called songs. Do not dispute this until you have investigated for yourself, and then you will not. Go lie in the shadow of a hedge bordering a wheat or oats plat in early summer, and wait till a meadow-lark or field-sparrow perches near you, then with a good opera-glass scan him while he sings. Once you have caught the expression of his eyes, his song never again will sound the same. Ever afterwards you will hear in it nothing but meaningless, inarticulate rasping, or, at best, a liquid medley of involuntary notes. Put yourself in the oriole's place. It is May. The leaves are coming out on the maples, and the tassels adorn the oaks. It is early morning of a cloudless day. You spread your bright wings, and start in search of breakfast. From twig to twig, from spray to spray you flit, finding here a little larva, and there a bit of worm, just enough to keep you hungry. A blue-jay attacks you and drubs you; a house-cat makes a lunge at you as you fly past a garden wall; a boy throws a stone at you. Frightened almost to death, you seek the depths of a thick grove, where a goshawk tries to catch you,

and, escaping from it, you come near flying right into the claws of a blue-tailed darter! And so all day you flit from place to place, all the time in deadly fear, till night comes and hangs its shadows in the woods. Then from dusk to dawn you sit on a bough, and hear the owls hoot and the foxes patter about, and the raccoons clamber among the neighboring tree-tops. What a day of watchfulness and terror—what a night of awful fear! Day comes again, and with it hunger, and strife, and danger, and consequent restlessness. Who would be an oriole, with its three or four years of trouble? Let its nest swing in the sunshine of May, with the bird on its rim like a flame—I would rather be a lonely, naked, weaponless man in the savagest forest of Africa than to be that bird!

But to close this chapter, I will give an account of a battle, witnessed by my brother and me, in which quite an army of birds were engaged on each side. We were mere boys, just beginning our life in the woods with bow and quiver, and, early in the morning of one of the first days of June, were in a vast forest in a valley of North Georgia. We came upon a sort of natural orchard of wild mulberry trees, upon which the fruit was beginning to ripen. The sedge-grass of that region grew in dense tufts under the trees, and between these was spread a carpet of short wire-grass. Through the midst of

all this ran a clear spring-stream, a yard or so in width, tumbling among its stones with much bubbling and gurgling, as it sought the Coosawattee, a small river whose white-plane trees we could see a little way off. Here in this orchard the battle was raging. We had heard it long before we reached the spot. Woodpeckers, blue-jays, grossbeaks, blue-birds, cuckoos, thrushes of three or four kinds, fly-catchers, and chewinks, all flying back and forth, in and out, round and round, their feathers turned the wrong way, and their voices apparently hoarse with rage. Here a sap-sucker and a nuthatch fluttered together on the grass, engaged in madly pecking at each other's eyes; there a blue-jay and a grossbeak, like muffs of turquoise and ruby sprays, gayly exchanged blows; yonder a knot composed of two or three chewinks, a brown thrush, a fly-catcher, and a cuckoo, waged a genuine riot; while all around, everywhere, the rustle of struggling wings and the vicious shrieking of infuriated songsters stirred the air into martial ripples. Now and then a cowed and defeated bird, followed by its victorious enemy, whisked past us into the dark recesses of the woods. The reddening mulberries hung untouched on the dusky trees. The dancing swarm of ephemeral flies had their will of the sunshine, undisturbed by the red-eyed fly-catcher or sober-feathered pewee. The pots of the sap-sucker

were full to overflowing with the sweet juice of the vigorous young trees, but he noticed it not. All business was forgotten. It was a carnival of fight. The painted finches swept this way, the sombre thrushes flew that way ; and now and then, careering through the orchard like some black-mailed knight of old, we saw a great *Hylotomus pileatus*, that giant of the woodpecker tribe, charging upon the lines of his foes, uttering his loud battle-cry. What this was all about we could not ascertain. The price of a wooden bucket has caused a bloody war among men ; no doubt something less noteworthy had started this tumultuous struggle between the birds. But the end of the battle came in a most mysterious way. Suddenly, as if by some spell of magic, the din ceased, the wings were still, and then one by one and two by two the birds flitted away, till in all the orchard a jay uttering its mellow too-loo-loo, and a sap-sucker tending his pots, were all we could see or hear. There were no dead or wounded, not even a broken feather left on the field of battle.

We ate our fill of mulberries, took a shot each at the sap-sucker, and then strayed down to the Coosawattee, and enjoyed a swim as only healthy and happy boys can. *O le bon temps !*

CHAPTER XIII.

SOME WING-SHOTS, AND OTHER FANCY WORK.

RETURNING to Berkley's from Coquina Island, we stopped for one tide to shoot marsh-hens, on a sort of salt meadow. Here we did some shooting "on the wing," an account of which may serve as a lecture to the young toxophilite. The birds were wonderfully abundant, and the rushes and sea-grass quite low, making the conditions all we could ask. Cæsar, negro-like, posted himself on a sort of sand-dune overlooking our field of operations, and prepared himself for a quiet hour or two of uninterrupted enjoyment.

The game began to rise as soon as we entered the cover, one or two at a time, winging lazily along for fifty yards, then dropping down into the rushes again. We shot rapidly, and at first rather wildly, losing nearly every arrow; but they were only feathered reeds, and of little cost. After a half-dozen hasty trials each, we took more pains, and began to clip close, which deepened our ar-

dor, till finally Will cried out: "Who'll get first meat?"

The words had scarcely left his lips when I strung a fine bird along my shaft, bringing him straight down not fifty feet from my bow. Cæsar applauded me in a voice like a railroad whistle.

Will, after four or five more shots, clipped one through the thighs, not quite enough to bring it down, and it began a rolling flight with the arrow sticking in the wound. For a mere trial of chance, I let drive at it, although I was full forty yards away, and, by one of those marvellous windfalls of luck, centred it, killing it neatly. A stranger would have thought Cæsar a raving maniac. My note-book of the day bears the following entry: "One of the birds wounded by Will, killed by me, forty yards, by happy accident, before it could get away. Cæsar turned somersaults on sand and yelled like possessed. Lost sixty reed arrows, and seventeen broad-head shafts by this foolishness."

Will's metal was now up, and he did some pretty work, hitting with two successive shots. The beauty of the whole thing was the way the birds flew. They would get up from almost under our feet and fan away slowly in a direct line from us, not much above the level of our eyes. Along towards the last we were knocking them quite regularly every two or three shots; but the tide came on,

creeping into the grass and rushes, and soon got too deep for us. My score was ninety-eight shots, seventy-seven arrows lost, sixteen birds killed on the wing—the best score I ever made. Will shot one hundred and twenty-one times, lost forty-six arrows, and killed nineteen birds. We could carry only twenty arrows each in our quivers, and so lost some time in going back and forth to get fresh supplies, from the boat, at need. Once in my hurry I snatched up a bundle of broad-headed shafts instead of the reeds. I had got back to where the birds began to rise before I noticed the mistake, so I shot them away, of course, though they cost five dollars! They were a foot shorter than the reeds, wherefore they were lost more easily in the rushes.

Speaking of these reed arrows, we used them a great deal in the South. Williams recommended them for killing fish; but we tried feathering them for birding-arrows, retaining the length of thirty-eight inches. The reed is cut when green, held in a flame till hot and straightened, one end nocked and feathered, the other end sharpened and charred in the fire to harden it; then, lo! the arrow—a missile not to be excelled for any range inside of fifty yards. A man can make ready for feathering two hundred of them in a day. The reeds when dried are very rigid and extremely light. Narrow

feathers must be used on them. No heads are needed.

Since it is the purpose of this chapter to give the beginner in sylvan archery an exhibition of what has been aptly termed fancy shooting, the following from one of my note-books may serve a good turn in that line: I was wading down a shoal lagoon, and had just crept out of a dense growth of tall water-weeds and grass, when I chanced to spy a lonely teal, some hundred or so yards off, and at the same moment Will appeared on a hummock-point and prepared to shoot at the bird from the cover of a clump of palms. It would be a pleasantly bizarre painting which would truthfully represent the scene in all its peculiarities of feature and color. The archer's attitude, his dress of greenish tweed, green belt, and quiver of red, white, and yellow-feathered arrows, his broad, drab hat with looped-up brim, and the vivid tints of the foliage against which he appeared, made a strikingly picturesque composition of novel outline and gay colors. Each separate stem in the cluster of palms had been caught in the embrace of the rubber tree, and at the top, the fronds and feathers of the one, and the clear green leaves of the other of the trees, thus almost hideously bound together, produced a strange effect; whilst curious parasites hung here and there in the network, the fiery fingers of the

empiphitis pointing in every direction, like spikes of real flame; and down among the knotted and warped-up roots grew rank ferns and spears of variegated saw-grass, all interwoven with flowering creepers and strange weeds. In the foreground a shallow lake, four or five inches deep at best; in the background a solid wall of foliage; dark avenues on this hand, leading away to blackness; on the other hand, bright glimpses, the merest hints, of green savannahs or grass-prairies. Will threw himself into the position of an archer at "ready," and drew a light hunting arrow to the head. The teal was full sixty yards from him and sitting quite still. Standing thus in the attitude of a full draw, for a long shot, the archer, if he be at all natural and sincere in his work, will always present a striking picture of perfect muscular and mental tension. The right foot is planted firmly, and the left advanced a half-pace, with the upper portion of the body thrown slightly backward, the left arm thrust out straight on a line with the shoulders, the face turned square over the left, and the right hand drawn above the right shoulder, in the position of that of a boxer ready to strike a straight blow, excepting that the arrow-fingers are a little elevated, being on a line with the ear. The features of the face are rigid, giving every evidence of intense concentration of thought.

The eyes are fixed eagerly, almost fiercely, on the point of aim. You see the biceps and shoulder muscles roll up into great balls on arm and shoulder, quiver a little, then for a second, in an heroic effort, settle into utter stiffness. This is the point of loosing. The time is come. Twang! The recoil follows sharply, and the arrow, with a well-known, indescribable sound, darts away like a ray of light. But, after all, Will did not hit his bird. Here, however, comes in one of the beauties of archery. He hit so close to the teal, and so hard, that the water from the blow flew in little jets of spray all over it, and, in an ecstasy of convulsive flight, away it went! When you shoot with a gun, one miss is just as vexatious as another. It is a miss—maybe an inch, maybe an ell, who knows?—and you gain nothing from it. Your bird is missed, that is all. But with the bow it is the reverse. Will's miss was almost as pleasurable as a hit—the bird had such a hairbreadth escape—the shot was so well sent. I took off my hat and hallooed my applause till the forests rang again, and some long-legged aquatic birds awoke from their dreams in the tall grass and flapped lazily away across the lake.

The following is from my notes on mallard-shooting on a "back-water" pond in the "bottoms" of the Salliquoy River in North Georgia:

We had lost a great number of arrows and as yet had not bagged a bird. Will was across the pond from me, some four hundred yards away. Two mallards sprang from a clump of water-hazel near him. He let go two shafts before they got beyond reach, but, as usual for the day, missed. The ducks came directly towards me, rising higher and higher as they neared. I prepared for them and shot at an angle of forty-five degrees, striking one of them through with a very heavy broad-headed arrow from a seventy-pound bow. He was very high, and came whirling down in a way that made my nerves tingle with delight. This was full compensation for a hundred misses, for I was then but seventeen years of age, and Will only a little turned from twelve.

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE WEEKS OF SAVAGE LIFE.

IMAGINE a great, square-shouldered, half-nude savage, whose features betokened stolidity, cruelty, cunning, and maybe dishonesty, if nothing worse, standing in the middle of a long, slim shell of a pirogue, the thin gunwales of which were already nearly on a line with the water's surface; then think of a pretty stiff breeze blowing and the white-caps running glibly, and connect all with the idea of stepping off a staunch sail-craft plump into the canoe alongside of the Indian, knowing that from that moment you would not get a glimpse of a white person for three weeks, at the very least! I felt my flesh make a movement as if preliminary to disintegration, and for a moment I vacillated. In fact, my first impulse was to utterly refuse to trust my precious body to the mercy of wind and wave and all the man-eating sharks in San Lucie Sound.

Berkley no doubt discovered my trepidation, for he bustled about the half-deck of his little schooner, giving orders in a loud tone to have me translated

bag and baggage into the canoe. I saw at once that I was in for it. I could not back out now. I had longed to hunt with a native Indian archer, and had, after much negotiation, arranged for this very thing. So, setting my teeth and wrestling bravely with my nerves, I swung myself over the schooner's side by the rope offered me. Immediately my feet were caught by two strong hands and guided into the bottom of the canoe. I would have fallen out into the water at once, if I had not been thrust upon the boat's bottom near the prow. The foam leaped all round the gunwales, the canoe danced like a roasting pea. Down came my long lance-wood bow and huge bundle of arrows, and were stowed beside me. Then my big provision-box was lowered and set across the middle of the pirogue, its ends lapping far over the gunwales. Then—

"Good-by, old fellow! wish you big luck!" came from above in the voice of Berkley, and before I could get my mouth ready to return the salute, I felt the frail thing under me leap like a hare, and, casting back a glance, I saw the schooner going away like a phantom.

How that Indian could handle a paddle! We fairly whistled through the wind and the water. My nerve came back to me at once. The canoe could not possibly sink or turn over. It was a

charmed thing. It was sentient—endowed with instinct, almost. I drew in a long breath and sat bolt upright, letting my eyes wander over the creaming waves to the limit of vision in the direction of our flight. The wind was boisterously musical, the green salt water was in a high glee. Away before us a slender crescent of sand lay between the surf-line and the low shore-bank set with clumps of palms and fringed with coarse, rush-like grass. The sun was low, and we were running right in his face, so that, as I looked over my shoulder, his light, almost level, shot into my eyes with dazzling effect. Soon, however, we dipped into the margin of shadow, as if we had found those shading-lines of the map, made to mark the shore of a sea, when all at once a sense of delicious coolness and dampness, like that which hovers in the mist of a waterfall, crept over me. The salt air had never before smelled so sweet. A flight of white-winged plovers overhead let fall upon us a silken rustle of plumage. One extreme follows another. I suddenly became as bold as I had been timid. I actually turned round so as to sit facing our course. To be sure, I accomplished the feat by a series of gingerly moves, but when I once got round, what a charming scene was presented to me! We flew into the mouth of the crescent, and lo! a creek opened as if by magic,

into which the canoe waltzed like a Frenchman, after which the white-caps disappeared, leaving us upon a tranquil surface, over which our little vessel slid like a new moon over a June sky. Points of marsh-land, overgrown with rush-grass, struck out at us, but the creek interposed its silvery hand, and as we glided on we heard the low, lazy swash of the tide in the miniature inlets. Presently a swell of hummock-ground, with a cincture of dusky palmettos, and dotted with clumps of slender pines, a very garden of the South, rose up before us. The paddle-strokes grew slower, gentler, and then as a breath of flower-fragrance gave us a hint of what a tropical *parterre* we were approaching, with a little jarring of the canoe, and a short jerk, we touched shore on a keen blade of sand sheathed in the bosom of the creek.

"Get out, ugh!" was the command from Tommy, the Seminole, or Okechobee (I know not which he was).

I obeyed promptly; but, in so doing, awkwardly pressed back upon the boat's prow, sending the light thing spinning away from the beach, and fell flat on my face in the sand. Tommy made a wry face, a hideous sort of smile, as he paddled in again.

"Ugh! dam scare!" he remarked, as he picked up my provision-box and lugged it ashore. I made

no reply, but busied myself with taking care of my bow and arrows, which Tommy scorned to touch, he, no doubt, looking upon my London-made weapon with much the same sort of contempt that backwoodsmen used to have for the "new-fangled" rifles of the city-bred sportsmen.

We dragged the pirogue ashore, and, under the muscular guidance of Tommy, I was soon at home, bag and baggage, in the Indian's hunting-lodge, which stood on the highest swell of the hummock. Berkley had given me some instructions; therefore, the first thing I did was to present Tommy with a huge new pipe and a big bag of smoking-tobacco. He took the gift in silence; but I saw that I had won him. His face softened, and he wagged his head pleasantly.

We filled our pipes then, and lighting them just as the sun touched the horizon, sat down in front of the palmetto-thatched hut facing the sound, with the sweet wind singing in the pines overhead, and smoked like two volcanoes—smoked and smoked in silence, watching the myriad waves, out beyond the bar, leap and wrestle and tumble round the low-lying coquina points and rush-lined islets over against the creek's mouth till twilight died and the stars came out and hung above us like great golden clusters of fruit ready to fall. Then we went to rest, on our beds of pine straw and Spanish moss, and I

slept through that cool December night without a dream or a start.

When I awoke it was gray dawn. Tommy was already up and gone, leaving behind him the fragrance of tobacco-smoke. I drew on such clothes as I thought the state of society demanded, and went down to the water's edge to take a morning bath. The merest breath of wind was astir, and so still was everything that the boom of the sea on breakers several miles away was distinctly audible. To breathe was to become intoxicated with delight. Long and lovingly I dabbled in the cool salt water, absorbing its healthful essence through every pore of my body and limbs.

But my savage life must needs open savagely. Suddenly I became aware of the presence of a companion, a beautiful, slender, tawny cat—a panther something less than a year old—skulking under the fringe of rushes on the other margin of the slim finger of water. It did not seem to see me. I withdrew from my bathing-place and went to get my bow and arrows. When half way to the lodge I heard a sharp, angry cry, half-growl, half-scream, that started the blood in my veins with painful suddenness. I ran and snatched my bow, strung it, seized a handful of arrows and stole cautiously back to my place of bathing. The animal was still there, but it was now standing on its hind feet,

making its fore-paws play about its head, which was covered with blood and foam. I drew a heavy steel-pointed shaft full to the barbs and let drive. My strong bow made the arrow hiss fiercely as it flew against the thing's breast and passed in up to the feather. A lunge and a plunge and a plash, and here came the agonized animal over and over through the water, howling terribly.

Whiz! Thwack! An arrow, from a point farther up the creek, struck it in the head and settled it. A few struggles and it lay floating on the water near the hither edge. On walking down a little closer I saw four arrows in the cat instead of two; and, with a grunt of satisfaction, Tommy, who had delivered the death-shot, joined me, holding in his hand a stubby bow, and bearing at his back a quiver of short arrows.

Instead of paying attention to the dead animal, Tommy put his hand on my bow in a solemn, caressing, and altogether ludicrous way, and said:

"Ugh! dam good! Ugh! shoot hard!"

According to instructions from Berkley, I returned this flattery by some very fulsome remarks in praise of Tommy's weapons and skill. Then we hauled the dead cat to land, and over its body we silently welded our friendship, and henceforth our mutual confidence was firmly established. I

had found an archer companion of the primitive sort, who could rightly appreciate me and my love of the long-bow and arrows. This savage sportsman at my side was in an instant dearer to me than all the enlightened men who had ever laughed and sneered at what they were pleased to call my "mediæval crotchet," my "mild insanity touching a useless weapon of antiquity." And Tommy, too, was an Ishmaelite on account of the long-bow. He had left the remnant of his people in the everglades by the Okechobee, because they had, as he expressed it, "got rifle too dam much. Ugh! bang! bang! scare all turkey, bear, deer, crane, duck clean off—ugh!" Oh, noble red philosopher! your words went to the thirsty places of my being. They were sweeter than flute-notes heard from afar!

We skinned the cat—not gymnastically, but literally—and, after a thorough bath, and "bout" up the creek to look for tracks, we took breakfast in the open air, such a breakfast as Tommy's jaws never before had closed over.

Think of a wild Indian eating jelly-cake and canned fruit, to say nothing of chow-chow and sardines, along with his broiled meat and roasted fish! My crackers—sea-biscuit—seemed to please him best. Berkley had laughed at me when he saw me stuffing the sweetmeats into my box; but

if he could have seen that Indian consuming them he would have awarded me high honors as a caterer for a savage hotel. Tommy smacked his lips, and grunted after the manner of a bassoon when he was done eating.

Over against the wide door of our lodge, a half-dozen palmetto trees were fancifully grouped together, forming a charming arbor, their great fans lapping across from top to top. The slender boles of some of them were penned in five or six feet high with the bone-like middle stems of their fallen leaves, giving them a weird, skeleton look; but under them a thick, short wire-grass made a most inviting carpet. Here we went for a smoke and to mature some plans for the future. Tommy began to be more sociable and communicative, giving me a rough outline of the surrounding country while he was mending the feathers of some of his elaborately finished arrows.

Of course, after the morning's adventure, I was expecting to see catamounts and panthers everywhere, but Tommy assured me that this one was the first he had seen for many months. Indeed, panthers are very scarce in Florida. I have never seen but two in that State. Deer, too, he said, were getting quite rare, but turkeys and wild-fowl were abundant and near at hand.

I drew from him, by degrees, his theory of

archery, which with laconic terseness he expressed as follows:

"Any stick do for bow—good arrow dam heap work—ugh!"

On close examination I found his bow to be the stem of a small sapling split in halves, with very little finish; but his arrows were a wonder of exact work and feathered on the true scientific principle. I could not bend his bow in the slightest, and, when he had braced it, it would have taken the balls of my fingers off to have drawn an arrow to the head on it, yet his great horny hands used it without trouble, sending an arrow of his make full as far as I could, with my bow, shoot the best Highfield target shaft! My hickory hunting arrows, made at great expense by a cunning carpenter, under my own direct supervision, and pointed by a smith of approved skill, were appreciably less nicely adjusted than his. You could easily discover the difference, watching their flight through a long shot over open ground. Here was a triumph of savage cunning and skill over enlightened science and art! This fine finish is not common to Indian arrows. Most of the missiles in the quivers of Sioux, Navajos, and Comanches are detestably rough and unreliable things.

What a fortnight followed my introduction to Tommy! It was a short, deep draught of the

kind of life I had so often dreamed of and longed for. I became a savage of the purest type. In less than three days I could paddle a canoe second only to Tommy himself, and at the end of a week I had mastered a great number of Indian hunting-tricks, and had become a third better shot than when I landed at the hummock.

What days spent coasting about the fringes of the inlets for wild-fowl, or stalking the thickets and savannahs for turkeys! When I think of it now, I can hear the dull "flap" of Tommy's bow and the "tshe-e-e-e" of his deadly arrow, ending with a "chuck," as it puffed the feathers from a duck or struck a turkey through and through; and I live those days over again.

From the first I recognized Tommy as my master in the noble science and art of archery, and I labored hard to win his approbation by some achievement worthy his notice. At last I accomplished this. He had a very broad-feathered arrow which he had named "floo-hoo," on account of a peculiar roaring sound it made while flying through the air. You could hear it two hundred yards. One day he shot this arrow at a plover standing on a point of sand. It went loudly whizzing just over the bird's back, making it settle low down as if struck at by a hawk and frightened out of its wits. I was at Tommy's side when he shot. The bird

was a good hundred yards away. He did not miss it a foot. Now was my time, and I settled myself to my work.

Selecting a light, narrow-feathered shaft, I planted my feet firmly, measured the distance carefully with my eye, drew to my ear and let go. It was a glorious piece of luck and good shooting combined. The arrow went like a thought, noiselessly, unwaveringly straight to the mark, cutting the game through the craw, killing it on the spot. I leaned on my bow with as much nonchalance and grace as I could command, while Tommy gave me my meed of praise. He patted me on the back and wagged his head significantly ; he grunted in various keys, and finally wound up with :

" Beat ! ugh ! nice ! good ! dam ! "

On one of the sweetest days that ever blessed a semi-tropic country, we drifted in our little canoe out of the creek's mouth, and shot off among the wilderness of islands beyond which the ocean kept up its eternal booming on the reefs. I let Tommy do all the paddling, whilst I, pretending to keep on the lookout for wild-fowl, lay almost at full length, gazing over the gunwale, enjoying the delicious sense of rest. The water was as smooth as glass, and the tireless arm of my stalwart comrade sent the light shell along, like a swallow skimming the surface, with scarcely a ripple in the wake. It was

while I lay thus that Tommy gave the finest exhibition of archery one may ever expect to see—the finest, perhaps, ever seen by any one. An albino fish-hawk, almost snow-white, came drifting over us, high up in the calm reaches of mellow sunshine. Tommy let fall his paddle on the bottom of the canoe, and seized his bow and an arrow, stringing his weapon almost instantaneously. For a moment he steadied himself, then fixing his keen eyes on the bird, he drew with such power that the huge muscles on his arms writhed into dark knots and kinks, and the tough wood of the bow seemed strained ready to break. When he let go, the arrow fairly screamed through the air. I could not follow its flight, but I saw a ring of white feathers suddenly formed above the great bird, heard the "chuck" as it whirled over and came tumbling down to the water impaled on the shaft!

That night we slept on a mere tuft of an island in full view of the open ocean, and had the ill-luck to be caught there in an awful gale, which flung the spume of the hungry white-caps to the highest point we could reach, coming very nearly washing our boat away in spite of all our efforts. The worst was over, however, in less than three hours, and then I had a sweet sleep on the cool sand, washed as clean as any sheet by the ebb and flow of the water in the pulse of the storm. I recollect

that when I awoke the sun was just above the ocean in the east, and Tommy was sitting close down by the surf-line smoking, in an attitude not unlike that of a huge bull-frog. Far away I saw a white sail, some ship blown out of its course by the storm. In a few minutes it had dipped below the horizon, on its way to the cities I despised.

When we returned to our hummock, lo! our lodge was gone on the wings of the wind, blown bodily away. No great loss, however, for Tommy erected a new and better one in about two hours. For the remainder of the day we lounged on the stiff wire-grass, smoking and dreaming our dreams, with a heaven blue as turquoise above us, and the wind, like a cool stream, washing over us from head to foot. I had adopted, in the main, Tommy's fashion of dress, and wearing it I obtained a new insight into freedom. Savage liberty is something, indeed, for poets to be proud of. There is no other liberty. Free limbs give free thought. A fashionable coat knocks all the poetry out of the soul—a pair of patent-leather boots will ruin a deal of philosophy. Let in the wind and sun to your skin, and you will absorb and assimilate the very essence of healthful nature, after which it will well from your heart in song as true and pure as the song of a babe, and as strong as the voice of the sea.

Several miles back on the mainland, west of our lodge, was one of those small, coffee-colored lakes so common in middle and southern Florida. It was a tranquil, wood-locked sheet, reflecting in its brown breast the magnolia and bay trees that fringed its margin. We reached it by infinite labor, poling our canoe up a narrow, crooked, Styx-like stream, which every here and there was choked up with rushes, lilies, and tall aquatic weeds; many of the latter flaunting gay flowers. The lake was called by Tommy "Crane-Crane" on account of the numbers of cranes and herons haunting it. We camped near it for several days, enjoying some delightful sport with the long-legged, stately-stepping birds.

Tommy and I took turns about paddling the canoe round the edge of the pond, while the other lay in wait for the wary victims. I killed a beautiful white heron on the wing, no doubt an accidental shot, but I got more praise from Tommy, nevertheless. Our leading adventure, however, was with a huge alligator, which came near ending me, most ignobly, by a twirl of its tail. We had headed the big fellow off from the marsh he was making for; he seemed stupid and slow, as if something had but half-aroused him from a deep torpor. An arrow or two, which rebounded from his flinty hide, seemed to somewhat enliven him; he

raised his head and gaped at us. Simultaneously Tommy and I let him swallow a couple of broad-headed arrows. What contortions! He came tumbling towards me. In my hurry to avoid him I tripped on a bunch of saw-palmetto and fell full length on the ground. The next moment the giant saurian's caudal weapon just grazed my body —a blow that would have bowled over an ox! He escaped very easily, plunging into the mud-slush of the marsh. This was as much alligator fun as I could stand.

Day by day the fascination of savage life wound its silver snare-threads closer and tighter upon me. Its sweetest part was the idling time at noon and night when, stretched under the pavilion of a palmetto tree, or lying on the white sand of the beach, I felt time drift by me like a fragrant tide, every moment a bubble, and every hour a warm, foamy wave of quiet joy. Sometimes, too, while floating at the will of the tide in Tommy's little canoe, a breath would fall upon me, as if fresh from God's lips, and I would suddenly become, in truth, a living soul. To and fro, to and fro, the little cradle swayed, rocked by the shining finger of the sea, lulling me to sleep, with the wind above and the water below me. How refreshing and yet how quieting those

"Infinis bercements du loisir embaumé!"

No man with a soul can resist them. No man who has once tasted their unique effect can forget it ever. The other extreme of savage life is the wild joy of the chase—the whir of the arrow—the hard, successful shot—the struggle with danger by field and flood—then the camp-fire, the deep, sweet sleep and healthful awakening—the play of strong muscles and taut sinews—ah! what all does enter into it.

Running from one limit of this life to the other is the essence of rugged, utter freedom—the freedom of nakedness, if you like, the freedom to run and leap and yell, to lie down when you list and get up when you please, to eat freely and drink copiously—to smoke good tobacco without seeing elevated noses and hearing polite imprecations—to meet Nature face to face, and put your hand familiarly against her cheek, and talk to her as to an equal. All this I did with a gusto, and found it all good.

But I must hasten. If I stop to reflect I shall never know where to end.

We went from one bright place to another—out of one charming excitement into another.

Our next trip was down the coast to shoot curlews and marsh-hens, on a reach of strong rush-marsh, hemmed with a beach of sand, whereon ran innumerable birds, a sort of sandpiper. They could

dodge an arrow with surprising ease. We dwelt on a tussock of this marsh for a week, shooting till our limbs ached, then resting beside a pool of sweet water, to smoke and doze, bothered very little with insects, intensely happy and careless of the morrow. We bathed in shoal water, rolling and tumbling in the freedom of nakedness, just out of the reach of some big sharks that now and then lifted sword-like fins above the green surface of the sea, swimming round and round, sniffing the fragrance of our clean flesh, no doubt, and longing to munch us. Ah! what a lover salt sea-water is. It embraces one all over and thrills him through a thousand nerves to his remotest marrow. If there were no sharks, I should be delighted to swim from the Florida coast to the Queen of the Antilles!

But all things have an end, and betimes my savage life drew near its close. I started, with a feeling of sudden pain and sorrow and a sinking of heart, when, one night, sitting out by the water under the great red stars, I happened to count the days I had been with Tommy. Seventeen days! Three or four more and then farewell! Tommy was lying near me, smoking away, as peacefully as a piece of lighted punk in still weather. Good, strong, free Tommy, my model archer! How could I ever leave him and tear myself away from this sweet, careless life by the warm sea? But duty is inex-

orable. The days leaped past like fawns in a fright, and one morning we saw, from the door of the lodge, the sails of Berkley's schooner shining beyond the creek's mouth. A puff of white smoke from the larboard bow — a moment, and then, boo-o-o-m! a signal from Berkley's fowling gun. I must get ready and be off. I hesitated. I looked at Tommy. His face was inscrutable; but he began to get ready my things to hurry me away! Perhaps the dear fellow was tired enough of me—who knows? I sighed and swallowed a very hard lump of discontent.

Again my box lapped over the gunwales of the canoe, again I sat a-squat in the forward part of the frail thing, with my bow and what arrows I had left beside me. The green sea-water whispered to me from the flying keel, the wind sang to me, and the reef boomed far eastward; but I felt no shiver of delight leap through me. I was waking from my sweet dream, bidding adieu to my wild life, never to taste it again. The sound of the dip, dip, dip of Tommy's paddle was like a dirge. I pulled my hat low over my eyes.

"Hillo! all ready there, below!" cried Berkley.

I clutched the rope in a desperate mood, and climbed aboard the schooner. My box and my weapons followed me.

"Good-by, ugh!" said Tommy.

"Good-by, dear fellow!" I replied, and we flew apart, like two sea-birds, and all was over.

"The dirtiest, greasiest, outdaciousest looking man in the world, you are!" cried Berkley. "Let's have a drop or so." But I did not care for wine.

CHAPTER XV.

LADY TOXOPHILITES.

MUCH might be said why archery, as a lawn game, should be preferred to croquet by ladies; the reasons, however, for such a preference are not needed as arguments here. The preceding chapters of this book have shown that drawing the long-bow is an exercise, all at once, of the most important muscles of the body and limbs. Mr. Charles Reade and other eminent men lately have been at some pains to show that ambidexterity is a very great and a perfectly attainable accomplishment. How they have succeeded with the demonstration I do not care to consider; but that equal development of all the muscles of arms, legs, and body is quite desirable, and, in fact, necessary in course of a complete physical training, no one can deny.

This matter of bodily education, so to speak, is greatly overlooked in the training of our boys; and, as for our girls, such a thing has scarcely been thought fit for polite mention in connection

with them. Croquet has done much. It has taught our mothers that sunshine and wind and a little outdoor physical exercise cannot quite spoil a girl. But croquet is objectionable for two reasons. The first is that, since ladies will wear corsets, stooping is to them a very unwholesome act, causing a pressure upon organs of the body very sensitive and easily injured. The second is that the right hand and arm, or the left, if the player be left-handed, are the ones used all the time, and the effort of muscle required is too slight for working any appreciable benefit even to the active members.

Archery is performed in an erect attitude; it calls into action both hands and arms, the muscles of the shoulders and back, the chest and legs. The strain on all may be just as powerful and just as slight as one may desire, and the shock of relaxation may be perfectly governed. Another thing: one is sure to draw in a deep, full breath, expanding the lungs to their utmost, with pure outdoor air, just before drawing the bow, or during the act of drawing.

Archery is rowing, boxing, fencing, and club-practice, all in one, so far as its exercise of the muscles is concerned, without any of the objectionable and dangerous features of those excellent athletic performances. A thoroughly trained archer

is a perfectly built athlete. He has perfect control of all his physical powers. His arms are hard, supple-jointed, with biceps like those of a stone-cutter ; his chest is full, his back is straight, his legs quick and firm, his neck muscular, and his head well poised, his movements easy and graceful.

Ladies who wish to have rounded and beautiful forms must learn that exercise in the open air and free light of outdoors is the one thing that will gratify the desire. Pure complexions come of pure blood, and pure blood comes of sunlight and free, pure air. Deep breathing and regular use of all the muscles bring perfect health and powerful vitality.

A lady should be careful to begin shooting with a very weak bow. A twenty-pound weapon is not too light for the first month of practice. The act of bracing a bow is likely to produce pain in the right side when first attempted ; but a few trials will overcome the difficulty, if the bow is not too long or too strong.

Ladies should always use the shooting-glove, as their fingers are too delicate to bear the friction of the bow-string.

It is surprising how rapidly a lady gains strength under well-directed training in archery. She begins a slow-moving, languid half-invalid, and at the end of four weeks of regular practice you see

her running across the lawn to recover her arrows, like Diana pursuing the stags of old. She has thrown off her lassitude, and is already beginning to develop on her arms the outlines of perfect muscles. Let us see what has been done in modern times by female archers.

Eighty-eight years ago a match was shot at Branhope Hall, Yorkshire, England, between Miss Littledale, Mr. Wyborough, and Mr. Gilpin. The shooting lasted three hours. The targets were one hundred yards apart, four feet in diameter, with nine-inch golds. During the match, Miss Littledale hit the gold four times, the *last three shots being all in the gold!* Here was a lady winning a prize, by hard shooting, over two strong men! The most admirable part of it all is, that she closed up three hours of steady work with the three successive centre hits. What steadiness of nerve! what power of endurance! And then, too, to have accomplished this she must have been shooting at least a fifty-pound bow!

The Marchioness of Salisbury won the first prize of the "Hertfordshire Archers," which was a gold heart, bearing a bow set with diamonds.

In 1832, Miss Gresley won the gold bracelet, and Miss Isabel Simpson the turquoise gold knot, prizes offered by the "Woodmen of the Forest of Arden."

To this tolerance of archery by all, and the practice of it by so many distinguished ladies of England, during the past hundred years, the present generation of English women are in great part indebted for their fine physiques. Not that archery has directly done it all; but a proper appreciation of outdoor exercise was, by the fostering of target practice, thoroughly planted in the minds of mothers, and has borne fruit in the plump, muscular forms and healthful faces of their daughters.

Many of our city ladies, averse to the gayeties and fashionable dissipations of the watering-places, can find nothing to amuse them at the summer-houses in the country. Sylvan archery is just the thing they need. So soon as they have learned the use of bows and arrows, they may roam the green fields and shady woods, shooting at tufts of grass, or the slender stems of the young trees; nor need they have any fear of tramps or robbers, for a drawn bow, in the hands of a resolute woman, will bring the boldest villain to a halt, or to his death, if necessary. An arrow from a thirty-pound bow will pass entirely through the body of a man.

If you wish to sketch, take your bow and arrows with you, so as to shoot when you are tired of the pencil; and if you are fond of botanizing, your bow will serve you for a staff, and a strong arrow

makes a first-rate utensil for digging up small plants.

On the soft white sand of the ocean's beach, and along the shores of our northern lakes, a party of ladies may have fine sport, and most vitalizing recreation, shooting flight shots, or aiming at the curlews and sandpipers and plovers, a hundred yards away.

Social science begins with physical culture. The world must be moved by muscle as well as mind. The nearer women approach to the standard of the physical power possessed by men, the nearer they will be able to make their mental prowess recognized by the world. Vim, resistless energy, the magnetism of the great individual, come of powerful vital resources. The vigor of manhood on the world's fields of battle, its tireless strength of purpose and physical execution in clearing away the forests and hewing out civilizations in different ages, and its muscular force in every way, has done as much for the world as all the operations of mind, or more. Women who are agitating the question of woman's enfranchisement must learn that "might makes right" is not a maxim of immorality when clearly understood. The might of the liberally trained body, combined with the might of the broadly cultured mind, gives the right to a higher sphere of physical and intellectual action, and no

power can curtail the right without first weakening the might. The ocean has the might to fill the vast hollows of the earth wherein it lies, and it has the God-given right. So with a strong body and master-mind, the right to rule is inherent, and can never be eliminated by clever sophistries or impracticable theories of moral equality.

The end of social science is in the perfection and universal adoption of liberal humanities ; but this must result from a lifting, not by a lowering process, to the highest equality. Men and women must be borne together to the high plane of the millennium, and none but perfectly developed bodies and souls can bear the strain of the lifting

CHAPTER XVI.

SHOOTING WOODCOCK AND PLOVER.

WOODCOCK-SHOOTING with the long-bow is rare sport—rare in quality and rare as regards the opportunities for experiencing it. The ordinary haunts of the bird are so brushy that snap-shooting on the wing, a thing not to be thought of by the archer, is the only way of taking it. If you rely on the bow, you must have very favorable ground, be keen of eye and a dead shot, to make this noble game find its way to your table. In a word, you must be able to find your bird on the ground, and to kill him when you have found him, neither of which is an easy performance. Like most wild things, the woodcock has a combination of colors peculiarly adapted to the prevailing tints of the places he haunts, and in such a way as to make him next to undistinguishable when at rest among the tufts of brown grass or heaps of old withered leaves, generally found in the places he visits in the shooting season. This, even under the most favorable circumstances, causes the archer much

trouble ; but when, after a long and careful search, he descries the outlines of his bird, and by a well-sent shaft knocks him over, he is richly paid.

This power of rendering themselves practically invisible to all eyes save those of the trained hunter, is possessed by the snipe, the quail, the pheasant, the hare, and a few other wild things. I have seen a keen-sighted greyhound run round and round, vainly looking for a gray rabbit which had squatted in plain view on the bare smooth surface of a country barn-yard. Even the powerful vision of a hawk is powerless to separate from the tuft of dry grass the mottled body of a crouching quail, and I have spent an hour watching a blue-tailed darter (the small chicken-hawk), which, perched on a fence-stake or old tree, waited patiently for a meadow-lark to discover itself by the slightest motion.

I remember a day's sport that Will and I had on the celebrated Devon farm of Richard Peters, Esq., which lies near Calhoun, Georgia, resulting in the death of seven as fine woodcock as ever went to table. It was in December, but, as is often the case in that latitude, the day was quite warm. We had been informed by a lad who had been shooting meadow-larks on the blue-grass fields of the beautiful farm above mentioned, that he had seen some big snipes in a bit of wet land, and we at

once surmised that these big snipe were really woodcock.

We hired the boy to go with us in the capacity of pilot, and a little after sunrise we were on the ground with our bows strung and our quivers full of light blunt-headed arrows. The marsh was small, covering not over three acres of land, and through its centre ran a small ditch stream trickling down to the beautiful Oothcaloga. A kind of rush or semi-aquatic sedge grew in heavy tufts all over the wet portion of the tract, and where the land was dryer the blue-grass thickly carpeted the surface with its short sward.

Separating a little, Will and I at once began our search by slowly advancing into the wet area, scrutinizing every foot of land as we went. We had progressed thus but a few steps when Will stopped short, and, after glaring for a moment into a sedge-tuft, raised his bow and sent an arrow whistling to the spot. A fluttering sound, as of a bird entangled in the grass, and then a woodcock rose rapidly from where I saw the arrow sticking and wheeled away, uttering its sharp, peculiar cry. Will had missed his bird.

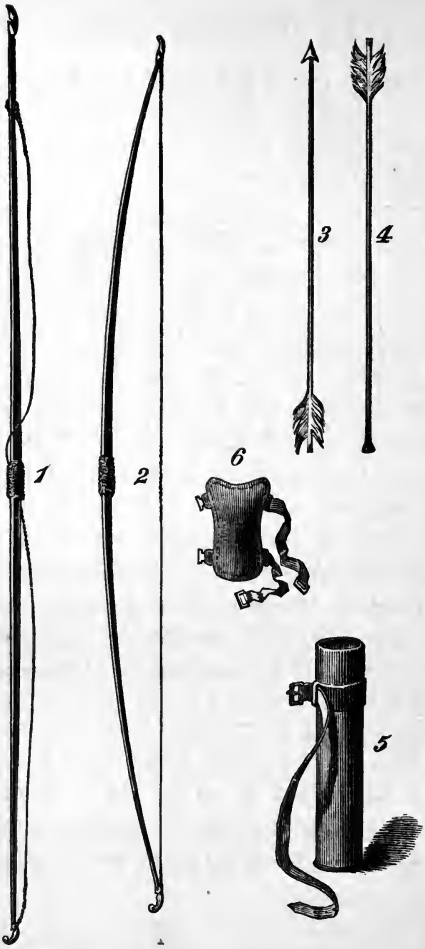
Despite my efforts to the contrary I became a little excited. How eagerly my eyes scanned every place where a bird might hide! How I longed for such a chance as Will had just had!

All at once my vision was blessed. No more than thirty feet from me the brown outlines of a woodcock were barely distinguishable under the drooping fringe of a sod of dead wire-grass. I stopped a moment to collect my nerves, drew my right hand across my eyes to clear my sight, settled myself firmly on my feet, fixed an arrow, drew to my ear and let drive. My shaft struck the thing and stood quivering there in its very centre, but not a feather stirred. I went forward and found that I had shot at and hit a brown clod of earth. I pulled up my shaft and glanced at Will. He was chuckling at my mistake. I forget just what I said. Presently, however, we had better luck. Will drew first blood, bagging a fine bird, and I followed suit. We had a fine time of it. We got all the birds up and they scattered out and lit in the short grass of the surrounding pasture fields, whither we followed them and dogged them from spot to spot, till four of them hung at Will's girdle and three at mine.

I once had an excellent opportunity of watching the manœuvres of a woodcock while feeding. It was about the 1st of May, I think, and I was in ambush for some buffle-head ducks, near a pond. All about me the shadows of a maple thicket were duskier than ordinary twilight, and the ground was damp. While I was lying there waiting for an

assistant to go round the pond and drive the ducks to me, a slight rustling directed my eyes to a woodcock running swiftly in elliptical lines on a little patch of soft ground some twenty yards away. Its motions were strangely eccentric, almost grotesque—its wings akimbo, its head thrown back till its long bill pointed almost directly upward, and its big eyes gleaming as if in ecstasy of fright or pain. Suddenly it stopped, stiffened its legs like stilts, and began tilting up and down, piercing the soft loam to the depth of two or more inches at each downward movement. It drew forth worms and marsh grubs, which it devoured with lively show of delight. After a few successful borings in this way, it again began its strange curvilinear movements, lasting a few seconds and ending in a repetition of the feeding process, then again the running, and so on till some slight movement I made frightened it, whereupon it darted into a clump of water-grass, and I saw it no more.

Plover-shooting is in some places excellent sport. On the wet, short-grassed prairies of Indiana and Illinois I have shot them on the ground, and in Florida, where immense flocks of them congregate, I have killed as many as three with a single blunt shaft.



1, Bow (unstrung); 2, bow (strung); 3, barbed arrow; 4, blunt arrow; 5, quiver and belt; 6, guard.

APPENDIX.

ROGER ASCHAM, whose charming old treatise, "*Toxophilus*," is to archery what Isaac Walton's is to angling, has afforded me much of the matter condensed in the following pages. I am sure that pedantic old disciple of the bow would not, if alive, grudge me the privilege I have taken with his curious phrases and villainous spelling. Indeed, his is not the only book I have drawn from, with a free hand, in the course of my labor to make as plain and as easy as possible the road to a perfect mastery of the science and art of archery.

THE BOW.

The regulation length of a gentleman's bow is six feet from nock to nock of the horn tips. Its strength is measured in pounds, and is ascertained by drawing the bow with a spring scale and noting the number of pounds indicated when the string

is twenty-six inches from the inside of the bow, which is about the "draw" of a twenty-eight inch arrow. Measured from the centre of the plush handle the end of the bow which is held uppermost in shooting is somewhat longer than the other end, owing to the fact that in order to allow the arrow to pass over the exact centre of the bow, the handle is placed below that point. The notch in the horn of the shorter limb of the bow is called the *lower nock*, that in the horn of the longer limb the *upper nock*. The rounded side of the bow is the *belly*, the flat side the *back*, in English nomenclature; but here in America we say the *inner side* and *outer side*. The bow should always be bent *flat side out*.

The proper length for a lady's bow is five feet six inches. Fifty pounds is a good weight for a gentleman's and thirty pounds for a lady's bow.

What are called *self-bows*, that is, bows made of a single piece of wood, are the best for all ordinary purposes, being less liable to break or become injuriously affected by moisture or ill-usage. The grain fibres of the wood should be parallel with the bow longitudinally, for if the grain is cut across in the making, the weapon is liable to snap or shiver under the first strain.

I have found the yellow-colored lemonwood bows of Highfield's make the best to stand all kinds

of usage, but the snakewood, yew, lancewood, and the *backed* bows are springier and quicker.

What are called "fancy-backed bows" in the catalogue of dealers are beautiful weapons and shoot with surprising power. The best of these are made of snakewood backed with hickory.

Knots, decayed spots, short curls in the fibres, and freats or cracks render a bow liable to break at these places. In selecting, choose a weapon free from suspicious spots of every kind.

The nocks in the horn tips should not be too deep, as this renders the bow unmanageable when you come to unstring it. About two-thirds the diameter of the string is about the proper dimension.

Most of the bows sold by dealers are made of two sticks put together endwise and joined by deep saw-tooth notches and points filed into each other alternately and glued. Over this juncture is wrapped a tightly drawn layer of strong hemp fibre and still over this is glued the plush handle. After a time, unless great care is used to avoid it, the perspiration from the bow-hand will soften the glue, and the bow will break or part. A light, close-fitting glove on the left hand will obviate this.

Bows that have been manufactured several years and have been lying in a wareroom uncovered are apt to be damaged in the fibre. Test them by re-

peated strong draws before accepting them. However, if the wood shows clear and bright through the outer polish, it is probably sound.

Some weapons have the horn swelled too much just below the upper nock, rendering them hard to brace or string.

The slenderer a bow can be made at the handle, without rendering it too weak there, the better will be its shooting qualities, as the arrow starts at a less angle with the plane of sight from string to bow. With a thick bow the arrow will incline to the left, and miss the mark on that side.

The bow should bend evenly, so as to form when strung, or braced, a part of a circle, a little flattened at the handle, the string standing out about six and one-half inches from the inside of the handle of a six-foot weapon.

When shooting, if a painful recoil against the bow-hand is felt, the bow is too weak there, and should be padded with some soft substance, or a wadded glove should be worn.

The true power of a bow cannot be measured by its drawing weight, as a great deal depends upon the elasticity and quickness of recoil inherent in the wood. Hence the fact that a fifty-pound bow of snakewood will sometimes be found casting an arrow farther than a seventy-pound one of some other slower wood.

Whilst the horn tips are quite ornamental, they are by no means absolutely necessary. Very good bows can be made by having the nocks cut in the wood.

Mulberry, sassafras, bois d'arc, southern cedar, black locust, black walnut and slippery elm, are valuable woods, in the order named, for making bows; but the foreign weapons manufactured of lemonwood, lancewood, yew, and snakewood are far superior to any we can make in the United States of any of our native trees.

Do not use too strong a bow. Be able to handle your weapon without any straining or apparent effort. But too weak a bow should also be avoided. Take the golden mean.

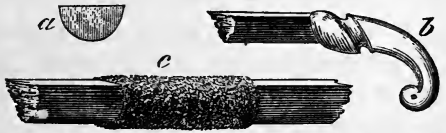
Always buy the very best bow you can find. You can never become an archer by penuriously hunting for cheap tackle. Besides, the best is, in the long run, always the cheapest at any price.

Keep your bow dry. The better it is, the more easily it is injured by dampness. A woollen rag, very soft, and saturated with boiled linseed oil, mixed with a little beeswax, should be kept to rub the bow with. Rub it just before putting it away after using it.

Keep the bow in a green baize bag, when not in use. Do not put it too near a fire, but let the room where it stays be always dry.

TO MAKE A BOW.—Take a good billet split from mulberry, sassafras, southern cedar, black locust, or apple tree, giving preference to the woods in the order named. Let the billet be from five to seven feet long, according to the desired length of the bow, and, say three inches square, perfectly free from knots, curls, freats, or rotten spots—in fact, a sound, clear billet. Now, with great care shave the piece down to a uniform size, for its entire length, nearly circular and about two inches in diameter. Lay the piece away to dry for two months, say above a country kitchen fireplace, taking pains that no hint of moisture ever reaches it. When it is thoroughly seasoned, finish as follows: First, mark the exact centre of the billet, and from this point, in the direction of what is to be the lower end of the bow, lay off a space of five inches for the handle. From each extremity of the handle taper the bow to the ends, excepting that what is to be the back must be kept flat and even with the grain. Dress the handle and body of the bow down till, by trying it, you find it nearly of the proper power. It should now be finished with sand and emery paper till as smooth and even as glass. Now glue a piece of green plush around the handle, and your bow is ready for the horn tips, which are the ends of cows' horns neatly turned and bored out to fit over the extremities of

the bow, which extremities ought to be but little larger than a man's third finger. The horns should be of the shape and finish given in the accompanying plate of detail drawings; but it must be particularly noticed that the drawing marked *b* was, either by my own fault or by a mistake of the engraver, made wrong; the wood of the bow is there made flat on the *inner side* and rounded on the *outer side* or back, whereas it should be *just the reverse*. The hole bored in the horn to receive the end of the bow should be tapering and deep enough to allow the wood to pass slightly above the nock. To make the horn work easily boil it in water till soft. A small hole is usually drilled through the tip of the upper horn, to receive a green ribbon which passes through the bowstring's loop and is tied in a fancy bow-knot. The drawing *a* is a



a, Section of bow; *b*, end of bow, showing nock; *c*, handle of bow.

cross-section showing the shape of the back and inner side of the bow when finished.

The backed bows are made of two pieces glued together the entire length of the bow. If made of American woods, have the back of white hickory

one-third of an inch thick and one and a quarter inches broad, and the inner side of black walnut or red cedar.

STRINGING THE BOW.

Stringing the bow ready for shooting is called *bracing* it.

To brace the bow, grasp the handle firmly with the right hand, place the lower horn tip against

the hollow part of the right foot, the back of the bow being next to the leg. Now place the heel of the left hand against the back of the bow at the upper end and below the loop. Pull outward with the right hand, and push inward with the left hand, at the same time pushing the loop into the upper nock with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. During this operation both feet are fixed firmly on the ground, the left slightly advanced. Some archers prefer to place the bow in the hollow of the left foot, reversing the position of the hands. Either way is equally good.

THE BOWSTRING.

Bowstrings are made of hemp or flax; the former is considered the best, and the material is waxed and slack-twisted without doubling. A loop is formed by the manufacturer in one end, and both extremities are trebled in size, forming a three-cord for about ten inches, gradually tapering. The best strings are the large white hemp ones, sold by dealers for about sixty cents each. Recently, some dark-colored cords, made of fine flax thread, have been giving excellent results. In choosing take a string with a heavy loop, as it will be found, on this account, easier to slip up the bow in stringing or bracing.

It requires some skill to put a string upon a bow properly. Usually the dealer furnishes the bow with the cord attached. By examining you will discover that, *at the lower end of the bow*, the string is fastened as follows:

First, the loop is slipped over the upper end of the bow, and made fast about two and a half inches below the nock. The string is then stretched taut and the other extremity passed around, *in the nock of the lower horn*, till it crosses itself in front of the bow; then pass the end, thus brought across, clear round under the main part of the string, and back round itself twice, forming a sort of slip-knot, without really tying it at all. Cut off whatever end may then hang loose and wrap the stump to keep it from fraying. If the beginner fears to attempt this kind of fastening he may form two loops for his string.

The middle part of the string should be wrapped for about six inches with fine silk thread slightly waxed. This to prevent the arrow and fingers, and the left sleeve, or bracer, from wearing it out. The entire cord should be occasionally rubbed with beeswax. If you can get hold of a real brown-hemp Flanders string you will soon discover its superiority; but the white ones, as I have said, are the best offered in our markets. A particularly good strong string, once secured, should be

carefully kept. The loop may be wrapped with fine leather, and the entire body of the cord covered with closely-drawn green silk thread well waxed.

If it happens to be necessary for one to make his own strings, the most available materials are silk and flax threads. The best quality of shoemaker's thread, in balls, may be procured in any village, town, or city. This I have found to make excellent cords, but, in order to give them sufficient strength, they are generally, of necessity, made too large to enter the nocks of the Highfield arrows, but the nocks can be easily enlarged by the use of a round file.

In order to keep the upper loop from slipping down when the bow is not braced, it has been the custom of archers to draw a bit of green ribbon through a small hole in the upper horn, then down through the loop, where it is tied in a fancy knot. With the string thus fastened to its place, which is called looping, the bow may be carried in any position of the manual of arms in marching or parading.

A string should be slender and even, twisted close, but not to kink, and very heavy at and near the loops.

Mark a place on your string, when the bow is braced, exactly opposite the top end of the plush

handle, for the nocking-place of your arrow. Always get the nock there before shooting.

If a good string begins to fray, wrap the place with fine silk thread, well waxed.

To enlarge the cord at the loops, wrap it with silk or fine flax thread until it is of the desired thickness.

Some archers wrap their strings with parchment, but I do not recommend it. Silk is best and most easily managed.

Always have with you some extra strings, ready looped and waxed, and fitted to your bow. A pocket case of leather is good to carry strings in; it keeps them from untwisting or getting otherwise injured.

When using a strong-backed bow, be very careful to remove the string, if it seems to be giving way, as your bow will be nearly sure to break when the string does, the recoil snapping the inner piece.

Keep bow-strings dry at all times.

THE ARROW.

For good shooting, everything depends upon the arrow. No matter how true your aim, how staunch your bow, or how steady your hand, you cannot hit regularly without perfect arrows. A bent stick of any kind, if it have a good spring, will

send a "best-footed, parallel-pointed" Highfield shaft straight as a bullet to the mark.

Arrows are of two kinds, viz.: target-arrows, and hunting-arrows.

The shaft, or wooden part of an arrow, is called the stele. This, for gentlemen, is about twenty-eight inches long, and a little less than one-third of an inch in diameter. For target-arrows hard seasoned pine or old deal is the best wood. For hunting-arrows, hickory, ash, elm, and pine rank in the order stated.

The steel head of an arrow is called the pile. This, for a target shaft, is round and passes over the end of the stele like a cap or thimble. It has a beveled point. For a hunting-arrow, the pile is a flat-barbed point set into a slit in the stele, and fastened with a metal band or a wrapping of fine wire.

In the end of the shaft opposite the pile is made a deep notch or nock to fit the bowstring. In the best arrows this is cut in a piece of horn set into the stele.

Next to having a perfectly straight and even stele, the most important thing about an arrow is its feathering. Three feathers are necessary. They are set on the stele about one and one-quarter inches from the nock, at an angle with each other of about one hundred and twenty degrees, or the

third of a circle, and so arranged that one feather is at right angles with the nock.

This one is called the cockfeather, and is colored to make it conspicuous. It should always be next the thumb of the arrow-hand in shooting, *i. e.*, turned out from the bow to the left.

The feathers used most for arrows are merely the *broader side* of the *vane* of a goose-quill stripped from the feather-staff and glued on the stele. India-rubber glue, such as is used by shoe cobblers, may be put on between the feathers to keep out moisture, but common oil paint will serve the purpose.

It is an old and honored custom in archery to have the stele of each individual's arrows painted or gilt with bands above the feathers, according to his own device, so that he may know his missiles wherever found.

For long-range shooting the feathers of the arrow should be narrow and the stele light. But for short-range accurate shooting let the stele be heavy and the feathers broad.

What are named in the dealer's catalogues as "whole horn nocked, best-footed, parallel-pointed arrows," are the best possible for target practice. They cost about seventy-five cents each. For ladies, however, the horn-pointed French arrows are nearly as good.

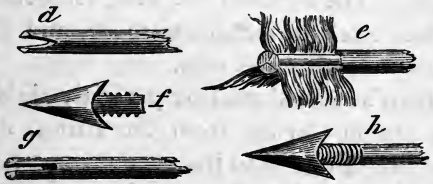
It scarcely need be suggested that, for shooting

in windy weather, arrows having narrow feathers and heavy piles are required. It is very hard to calculate the effect of a strong breeze upon a broad-feathered shaft.

The feathers of hunting-arrows should be stained or dyed bright scarlet, in order that they may be found easily when shot.

For bird-shooting the arrow-head may be a mere ferrule or cap of pewter.

To make a broad-headed hunting-arrow, prepare a perfectly round, straight, even, and smooth stick of hickory or tough ash, one-third of an inch in diameter and twenty-eight inches long; in one end saw a slit three-fourths of an inch deep and one-eighth of an inch wide to receive the haft of the head *f* (see plate), and in the other end cut a deep



d, arrow nock; *e*, section of arrow, through feather; *f*, steel arrow-head; *g*, slit in shaft to receive head; *h*, head wired on.

nock for the string. Now peel off from the bro... sides the skin or outer covering of a goose-wing feathers with the broad vanes attached and glue

three of these on the nock-end of the shaft, each one-third the circumference from either of the others —that is, the feathers standing parallel along the shaft and at an angle of one hundred and twenty degrees with each other. If necessary, they may be held to their place till the glue hardens by a wrapping of fine thread. The haft or shank of the broad-heads are then inserted in the slits and fastened by a close wrapping of fine brass wire. The heads of birding-arrows are ferrules of pewter moulded on the end of the shafts, or blunt caps of iron that any blacksmith can make. Pewter heads are best. The heads of target-arrows are pointed thimbles of steel.

For very light and swift-going arrows, the feathers should be very narrow, rather less than one-half inch wide. The vanes of the wing-feathers of wild ducks are excellent for this purpose, and those of the sparrow-hawk serve well.

An arrow's stele should be perfectly rigid. If it springs any in starting from the string, its flight will be "wagging" and irregular.

Hard, thoroughly-seasoned pine makes the best steles for target-arrows, but it is too weak for hunting-shafts.

If you can, always keep a full supply of Highfield's target-arrows. They are perfection.

THE SHOOTING-GLOVE.

The shooting-glove is made to protect the three first fingers of the right hand from the wearing effect of the bowstring in shooting. It is formed of three thimbles of stiff, smooth leather, having elastic stitches to allow them to perfectly conform to the size of the fingers. These thimbles are attached to strips of soft leather extending to and joining upon a wristband of the same, which buckles or hooks round the wrist. An elastic wristband is sometimes used.

A close-fitting glove of fine dog-skin, heavy kid, or Lisle thread is just as good or better. If your fingers can stand it, shoot without gloves. The true practice of archery demands a close sympathy (so to speak) between the bowman and his weapons, reached only through the delicately-trained *sense of touch*.

THE QUIVER AND BELT.

For target practice, the quiver is a round tin tube closed at the lower end and neatly covered with green-colored or fair fine leather. It may hold from three to six arrows.

The hunting quiver is best made of stiff harness leather, large enough to hold twenty-four arrows,

and just deep enough to allow the feathers of the shafts to appear above its top.

The target or hunting quiver may be carried in two ways—to a belt or a baldric. If to a belt, it is worn well back on the right side, with the arrow-feathers slanting forward. If to a baldric—that is, a sash, it is slung, like the old-fashioned shot-pouch, to a broad strap resting on the shoulder and passing diagonally across the breast and back to the side. The baldric of our English forefathers sometimes had a mere slip-noose, instead of a quiver to hold the arrows. This was tightened, by a slight draw, whenever a shaft was taken out.

The quiver is easily ornamented, and, when taste is displayed in this direction, nothing adds more to the picturesque and pleasing effect of a lady archer's appearance.

Attached to the belt near the quiver there should be a large woollen tassel for wiping the arrows whenever they become dirty or soiled. This, too, may be fancifully colored so as to make it strikingly ornamental.

A small silver, ivory, or ebony grease-cup is also hung to the belt, containing a composition of two parts lard and one part white wax, with which to touch occasionally the string, the arrow at the nock, and the finger-tips.

THE BRACER.

The bracer, or arm-guard, is made to protect the left arm of the archer from the blows of the bow-string. Usually it is of heavy polished harness leather, with elastic bands to confine it to the wrist and fore-arm; but very beautiful ones are made, by some of the Indian tribes, of the strong wing-feathers of large birds. Among the relics in the possession of some of the old archery organizations of Great Britain are bracers elegantly wrought of pearl and ivory. The surface where the string strikes should be extremely hard and highly polished. The use of the bracer will strongly suggest itself to the beginner in archery, and needs no further notice here. The arms of some persons, however, are so shaped that a bracer is not needed by them.

THE TARGET.

Butts, or walls of earth neatly sodded over, are much used in England as a backing for a small circular paper at which the archers aim. This is more particularly recommended in long-range shooting. The butts should be six feet high and eight feet long, placed from fifty to one hundred yards apart.

Straw targets, such as dealers advertise, are used

for all distances. Their diameters may be according to the following table:

DIAMETER.	DISTANCE APART.
1 foot	15 yards.
2 feet	20 yards.
3 feet	40 yards.
4 feet	50 to 100 yds.

Each target has a gilt centre called the "gold," around which are drawn four equal rings colored respectively red, white, black, white, the red being next the gold and the rest in their order.

When you hit the gold it counts	9
" " red "	7
" " inner white it counts	5
" " black "	3
" " outer white "	1

For a 1 foot target the gold is	2½	inches	diameter.
" 2 foot " "	4	"	
" 3 foot " "	7	"	
" 4 foot " "	9	"	

A shallow pine box three or four feet square, filled closely with earth, well packed, and having a coffee sack tacked over it for a lid, makes an excellent surface upon which to stretch a paper target-face for use in ordinary practice. The earth stops the arrow without injuring it and serves every purpose that a butt or a straw target can.

The faces of the targets sold by dealers are of canvas, but a cheap grade of white drawing-paper will answer the purpose just as well, at one-tenth the cost. Cheap water-colors or colored chalk will serve to mark the divisions of the surface.

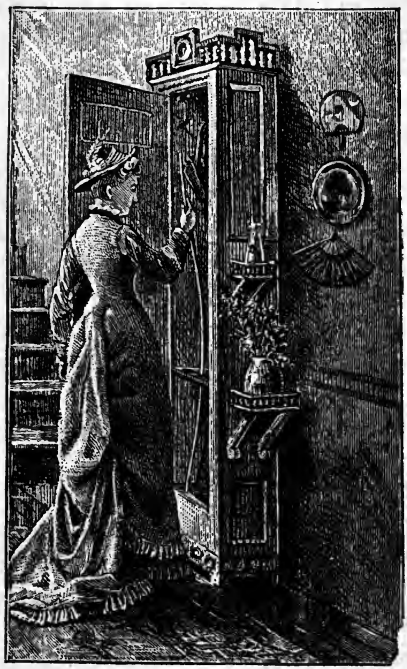
A very pretty and convenient target is what the old English archers called a "clout." It is made of stiff white paste-board, cut into circular form and divided just as other targets. It is from six inches to one foot in diameter and when arranged for shooting is slipped into a split in a short pointed wand or stick stuck into the ground.

A round staff of wood, one inch in diameter an five feet long, standing upright, was a favorite mark for the old English long-bowmen. A good archer could hit this at one hundred yards.

The straw targets should be supported by an easel, called a stand.

Iron easels are sold by the dealers, but one may easily make them of wood to serve the purpose much better. To do this take three pieces of pine, walnut, poplar or ash, or any soft wood, three inches square, six feet long. Bore an inch hole through one end of each piece and so tie all together with a strong cord as to leave them free to spread four feet at the lower ends. In two of the pieces bore a hole and insert a strong wooden pin, six inches long, about eighteen inches from the

end. Now set up this stand, or tripod, like a painter's easel and rest the target on the two pins. The ends of the pieces may be sharpened and stuck into the ground.



THE ASCHAM.

THE ASCHAM.

One of the most pleasing articles of furniture for a hall is the archer's ascham, so called in honor of Roger Ascham, one of the earliest writers on bow-shooting. It may be decorated with the richest carving, or it may be a mere box of walnut, cedar, or pine. In any style it is the general armory of the bowman. It should be six feet and a half high, two or more feet broad, and one foot deep; arranged in general like a

cupboard with a panelled door. Inside there should be a shelf eighteen inches from the bottom, through which holes are made for the bows and arrows to stand in. On the walls inside, hooks should be arranged upon which to hang the belt and quiver, the bracer and gloves, and, in fact, everything belonging to archery tackle.

A small portable case — sometimes called an ascham — made of thin, light boards, like those of a violin or guitar box, is a good thing in which to carry fine bows and arrows when travelling. Of course this, too, can be made as plain or "fancy" as the archer may desire. Black walnut, highly polished and oiled, is excellent and beautiful wood for the purpose.

A fine ascham should be lined with green plush or velvet.

THE CARE OF TACKLE.

It cannot be too often or too urgently insisted that, without great care, bows, arrows, strings, and all the archer's gear will soon be worthless.

Dampness, even the least, will absolutely ruin the finest bows, arrows, and strings.

The slightest scratch or dent may spoil a favorite bow.

Never allow the point of an arrow, or the nails of the fingers even, to touch the polish of a bow.

Keep bows, arrows, and strings well rubbed with an oiled and waxed woollen rag.

Never lay your bow on the ground.

Have an oil-cloth or rubber cover for your hunting-bow, and a large bag of the same for your hunting-arrows.

THE ARCHERY CLUB, AND ITS RULES.

To form a club, let any number of ladies and gentlemen associate themselves by a constitution and by-laws, taking some appropriate name, and electing their officers, such as president or master-bowman, secretary, and treasurer. I prefer the title of master-bowman to that of president, and suggest that societies ought not to cumber their organizations with too many mere honorary officers.

The master-bowman is, of course, the leader or chief of his band, and ought to be the best shot therein, for he should always be captain of any team chosen to compete with challengers, or challenged. He settles all disputes arising in the hall or on the grounds, except when he is a contestant; then an umpire is chosen.

The secretary and treasurer fill the same places respectively that are filled by like officers in other associations or companies.

At each shooting, the archer making the highest

score is entitled to the honorary title of captain of the target.

A gold, silver, or gilt bugle-horn is the most appropriate club prize.

A fine bow is a very good prize for the patron of a club to offer yearly.

The following is a copy of the rules of the "Derby and Reddlestone Archers." They should be adopted for their directness, thoroughness, and brevity:

CONSTITUTION RULES.

I. To meet one day in each month (or week).

II. Dinner to be on the table by four o'clock.

III. Bill to be called for and paid at seven.

IV. The ordinary not to exceed one dollar.

V. The absent members to pay for their ordinary.

VI. Number of members limited to (say twenty).

VII. Candidates for membership to be balloted for whenever seven members are present. Three black balls to exclude, and no excluded person to be balloted for during the season.

VIII. That meetings be advertised in a county paper, and members notified by secretary.

IX. That no alteration be made in constitution or rules, except seven members be present.

X. That the annual subscription of each member for expenses be (say three) dollars.

XI. There shall be admitted no honorary members.

XII. That the uniform of the members be (here describe).

The above have been, in substance, adopted by the "Wabash Merry Bowmen" as their constitution rules.

RULES FOR TARGET-SHOOTING.

1. That each archer have a scoring card or paper on which to mark score as follows :

SHOOTER'S NAME.	HITS.	NO. SCORED.	DISTANCE.
Wm. Green.....	1	7	40 yards.
	0	0	
1st End.....	1	9	
	Total Hits, 2	Total Score, 16	

2. That a captain be elected to superintend the scoring, and to settle disputes as to what a shot shall count.

3. That all persons, whether archers or not, shall keep behind the person shooting.

4. The range shall be (say sixty) yards for gentlemen, and for ladies (say thirty) yards.

5. There shall be two targets, one at each end of the range. Each shooter shall let go three arrows, and this shall be called *an end*. Then all persons, excepting the marker, shall walk to the other end of the range, extract their arrows, record score, and shoot three arrows back at the first target.

6. The number of ends for a game shall be thirty; that, is ninety shots for each archer.

7. That the rings on the targets score as follows :

Gold..... 9 Inner White..... 5
Red..... 7 Black..... 3
Outer White..... 1

8. That the archer getting highest total score shall be winner.

9. In case two or more archers are even in total score, the one having the greatest number of hits shall win. If the hits are equal, also, then the one having the greatest number of gold hits, or hits nearest the gold, wins, or, if the equal archers choose, they may shoot three arrows each to settle the "tie."

10. That "hits" and "scores" are to be counted and kept separately.

11. That the winners of first prizes shall not afterwards compete for the lesser prizes of the day, unless they agree to allow to each competitor the difference between his and their score as a handicap. That is, if the winner of the open first prize beat A, B, and C respectively ten, twenty-five, and forty points, then on the new score, for the second prize, A, B, and C shall have respectively ten, twenty-five, and forty points the advantage to begin with.

12. That an arrow breaking two rings shall be scored for the higher ring.

13. Any arrow rebounding from the target shall not be scored.

14. If an arrow "flip" from the string and the archer cannot reach it with his bow it shall be counted a shot, scoring nothing.

15. Each arrow shall be distinctly marked with the owner's name.

16. That no arrow be drawn from the target before it is scored; otherwise its score to be lost.

17. That each archer shoot no bow or arrows except his own.

18. That no archer shall be allowed on the grounds if he is known to shoot left-handed.

19. That the scorer keep each archer's score as follows:

June, 1878. SCORE-BOOK.

No. of Ends.	*Gold.*	*Red.*	*Inner White.*	*Black.*	*Outer White.*	*Hits.*	*Score.*
1st.							
2d.							
3d.							
4th.							
5th.							
6th.							

HOW TO SHOOT.

Place your targets on their stands ten feet farther apart than the length of the range to be shot, and facing each other. Place a mark, as a standing-point from which to shoot, ten feet from the face of each target. Now carefully brace your bow as heretofore directed. Put the arrow-nock on the string, at the place marked for it, with the cock-feather out to the left. This is done with your right hand, whilst your left tightly grasps the handle of the bow, holding it nearly horizontal. Now with the nock thus on the string, hook the first, second, and third fingers under the string, taking the arrow between the first and second. Turn the bow to the left with the left hand until it stands nearly vertically in front of you, your left arm extended towards the gold of the target. Draw with your right, and push firmly with your left hand until your arrow's head rests on the lowest joint of your left forefinger. Your right hand will now touch your right ear. Look straight and hard at the centre of the target's gold, but do not even glance at your arrow. Blindly direct your arrow by your sense of feeling. Let go the string.

There is no such thing as "taking aim" with an arrow. He is a bungling archer who attempts it. Shoot from the first by your sense of direction

and elevation. It will surprise you at first to see how far you will miss, but soon you will begin to close in with your arrows towards the gold.

When at the full draw, the bow should not be held more than a second. Feel for the gold quickly, and let go the string smoothly and smartly. The quicker shot you are, the better for you; but be careful not to make a little "snatch and jerk" when you loose the string.

The position, in shooting, should be graceful, easy, and firm. To this end, advance the left foot a half-pace, the toe turned towards the target, the knee of the left leg slightly bent. Fix the right foot nearly at right angles with the left, the right leg straight. Look directly over the left shoulder at the target. This position is called "putting the body into the bow," and will lead to powerful shooting.

MANUAL OF ARMS.

In parading or marching, the bow is carried unstrung, the string carefully looped with a strong green ribbon.

There are four positions of the bow besides those of bracing and shooting.

First Position.

Shoulder arms.—The handle of the bow is placed on the right shoulder, the right hand grasping the

lower limb of the bow near the nock, the upper limb elevated at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Second Position.

Order arms.—The lower horn of the bow rests on the ground by the outside of the right foot near the hollow, the weapon standing vertically between the right arm and the body, the right hand grasping it just below the handle, the upper limb resting in the hollow of the shoulder.

Third Position.

Carry arms.—The left hand grasps the handle of the weapon as in shooting and the bow is turned so that the lower limb is brought close up under the left arm, the upper limb pointing forward and downward, the left hand resting on the left hip.

Fourth Position.

Present arms.—The unstrung bow is held, as in shooting, directly before the archer, the left hand firmly grasping the handle.

In each position the bodily pose is that of a soldier, and the unoccupied hand hangs close by the archer's side.

To order arms from the shoulder.—Lower the right hand; at the same time passing the left hand

across the body, and with it grasping the bow-handle. Now lower the bow smartly but gently to position, and return the left hand to its place at the side.

To shoulder arms from the order.—Raise the bow vertically with the right hand until, by passing the left hand directly across the breast, it grasps the handle, then slip the right hand down and grasp the bow near the horn, and slip it quickly into position, at the same time returning the left hand to the side.

To carry arms from the shoulder.—Lower the bow with the right hand, carry the left hand across the breast and grasp the handle, turn the lower limb under the left arm, and bring the bow into position, the right hand remaining by the side.

To shoulder arms from the carry.—Turn the bow with the left hand so as to bring it vertically across the body to its place on the right shoulder; slip the right hand into position, and return the left hand smartly to the left side.

To present arms (always ordered from a carry).—Turn the bow with the left hand so as to bring it vertically in front of the archer, and there hold it motionless.

To carry arms from the present.—Lower the left hand to its position on the left hip, at the same time turning the lower limb of the bow close up under the left arm.

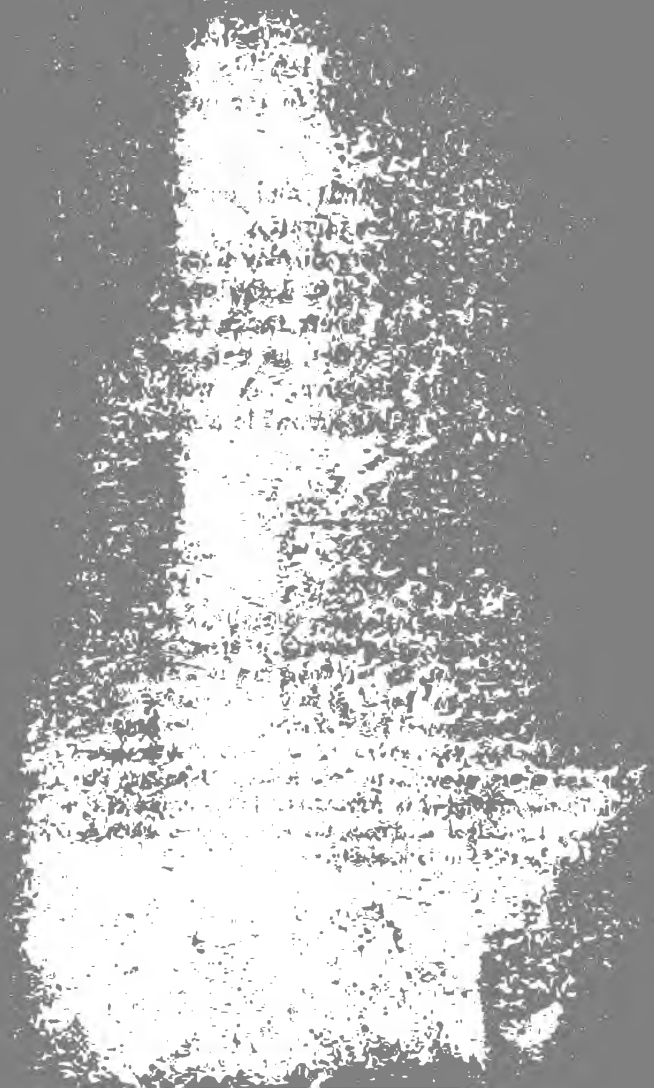
The marching commands and evolutions are those of the United States infantry.

There can be no military display finer than that of a well-drilled, uniformed, and equipped archery company. And at such short range as is needed in times of riots in our cities, no company would be more dreadfully effective. A well-trained archer will discharge thirty arrows in a minute, and every arrow is death.

NOTE.

The author takes pleasure in tendering his thanks to the publishers and proprietors of SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY, HARPER'S MAGAZINE, and APPLETONS' JOURNAL, for permitting him to use in this book the archery articles he had published in those magazines. To the wide circulation thus obtained for "*Hunting with the Long-bow*," in HARPER'S for July, 1877, and to "*Bow-shooting*," in SCRIBNER'S for the same month, as well as to the sketches of his hunting adventures in Florida, published in APPLETONS' JOURNAL two or three years since, the author attributes the circumstances which have seemed to make this book a necessity.

END.



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The witchery of archery